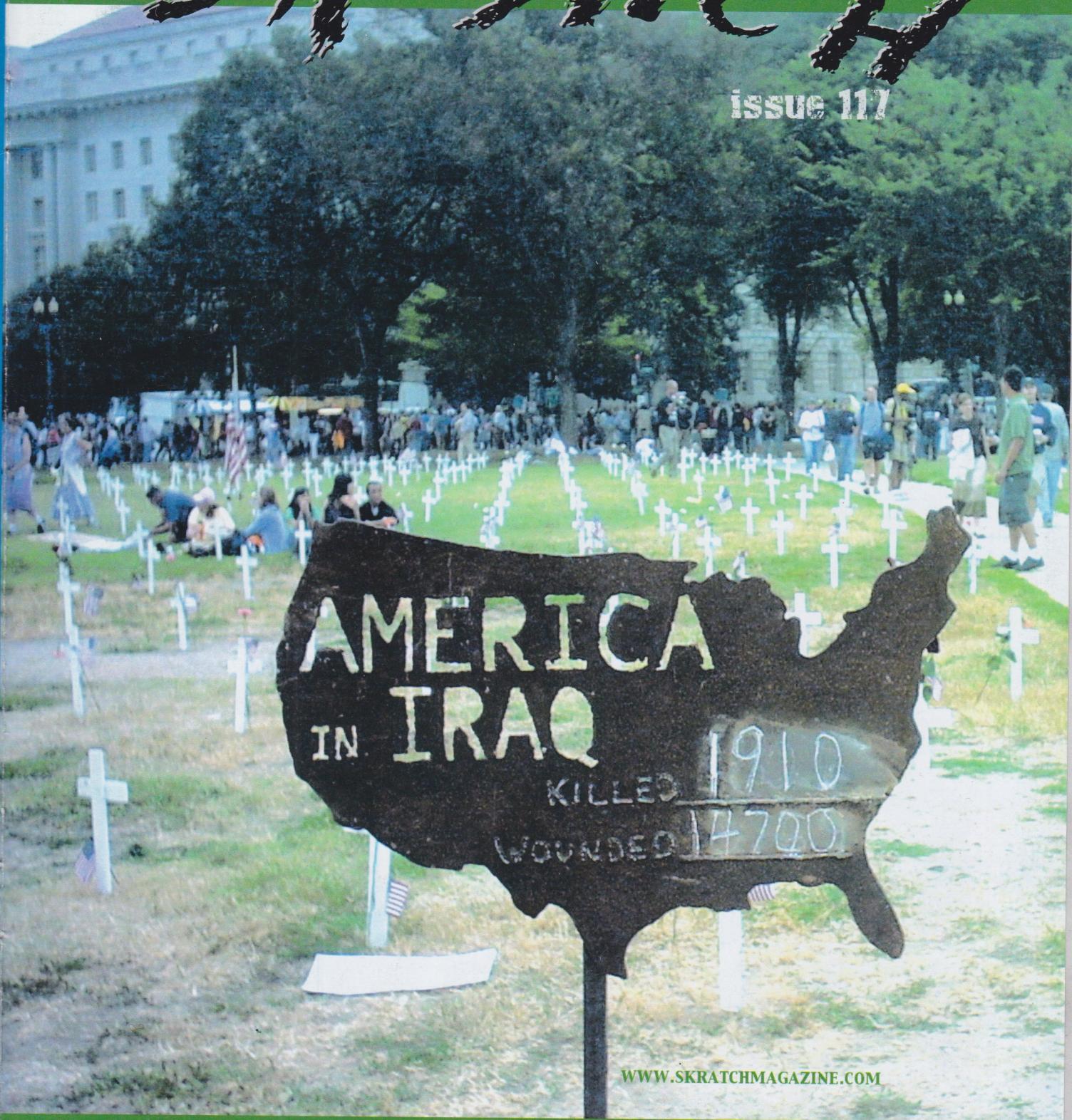


# SKRATCH

issue 117



[WWW.SKRATCHMAGAZINE.COM](http://WWW.SKRATCHMAGAZINE.COM)

CAVE IN/GOD FORBID/ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN/NASHVILLE PUSSY/VAUX/THE AUDITION  
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THREE BAD JACKS/THE BLOODY HOLLIES/A DOZEN FURIES/CORETTA SCOTT/CRITERIA  
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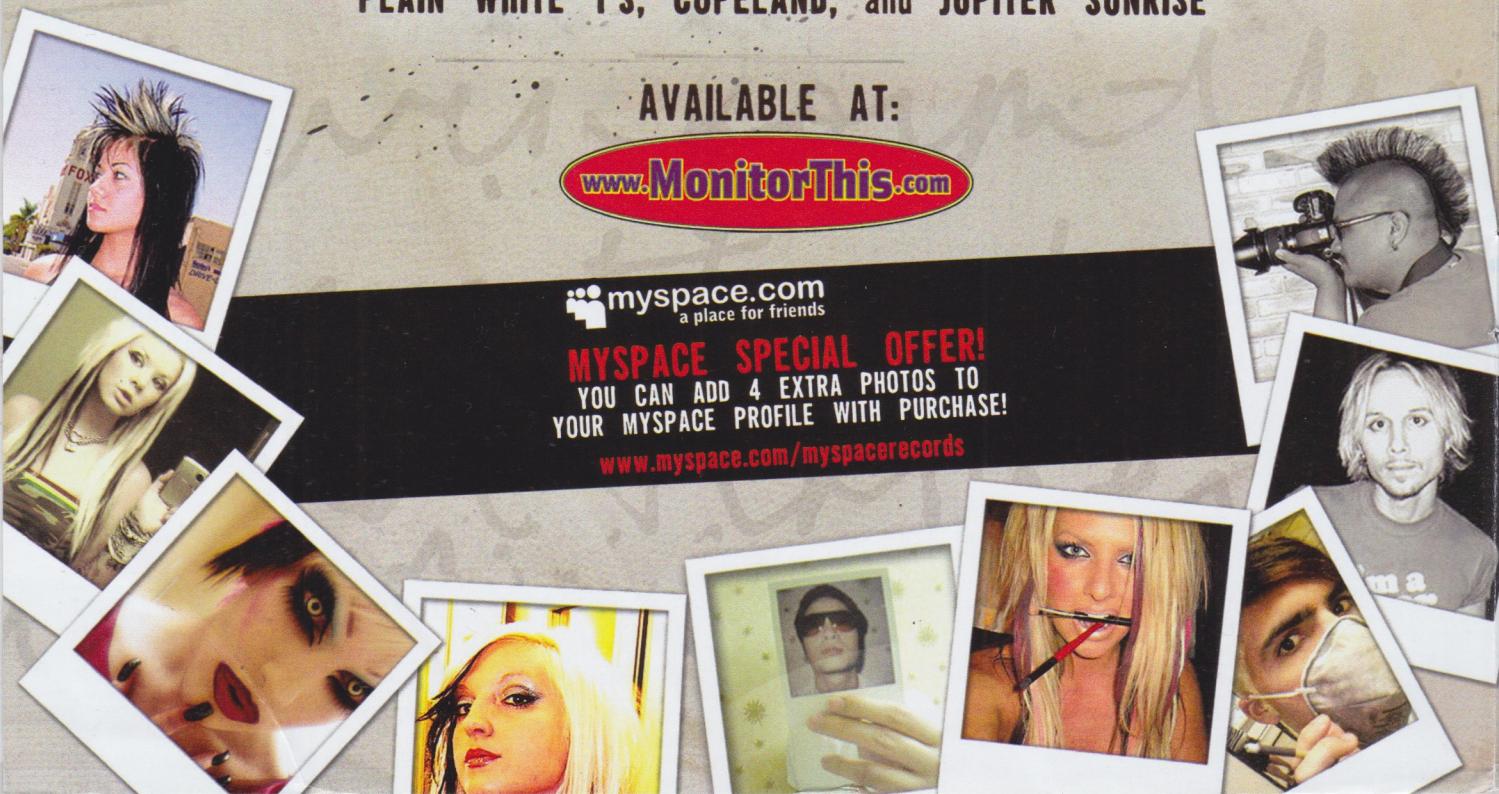
Also featuring **HOLLYWOOD UNDEAD, NEW YEARS DAY, SOCRATIC, SAY ANYTHING, WAKING ASHLAND, AGAINST ME!, TILA TEQUILA, THE SUMMER OBSESSION, PLAIN WHITE T'S, COPELAND, and JUPITER SUNRISE**

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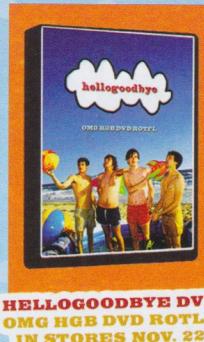
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IN STORES NOV. 22

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IN STORES NOV. 22

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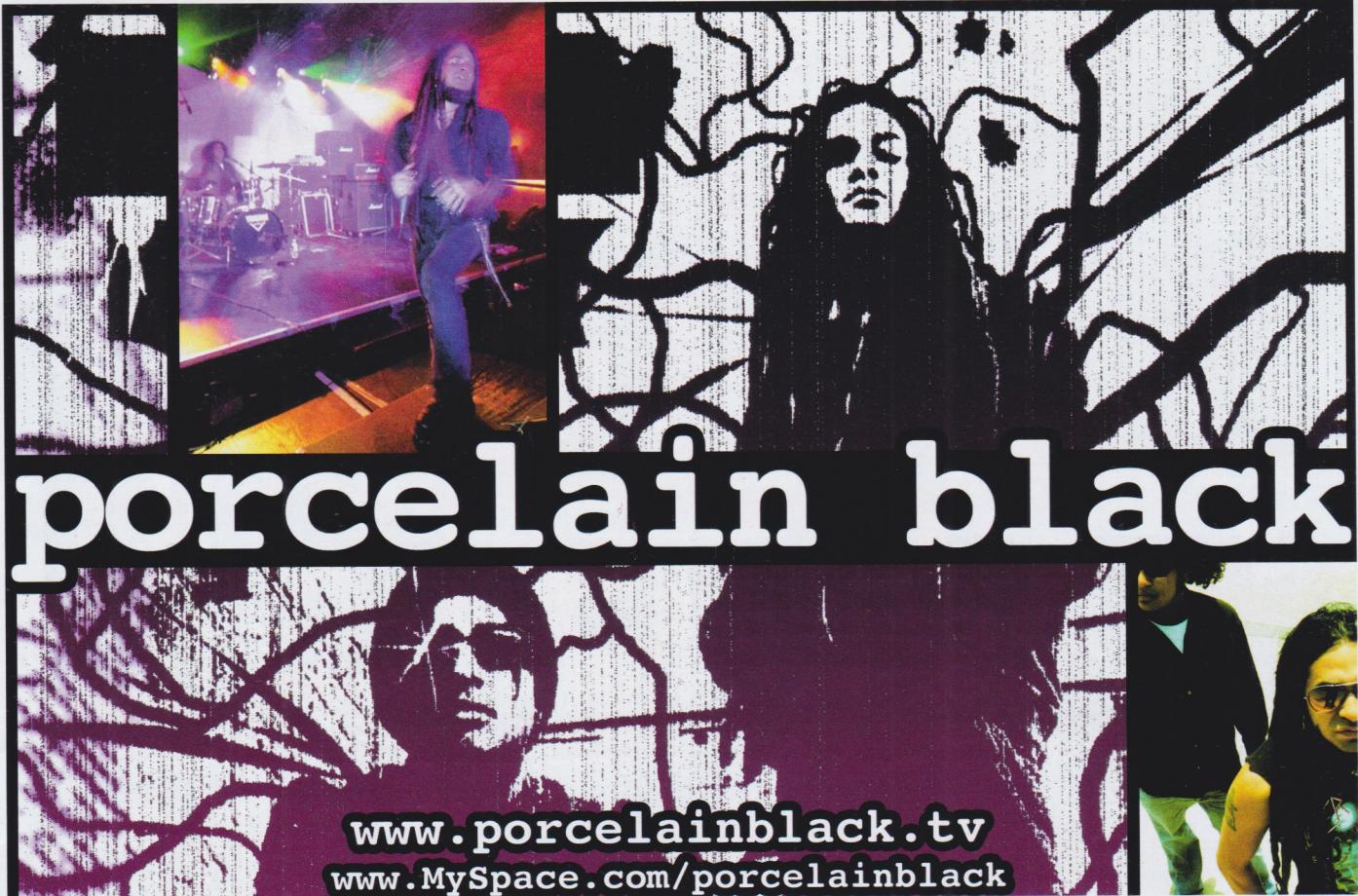
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To Someday  
 Beautiful  
 Blessed are the Clea  
 as the deer  
 IN THE  
 TRENCHES

WED NOV 16

SUICIDE  
 SILENCE  
 OBLIGE  
 Solemite UNDERNEATH  
 THE GUN

SUN NOV 20

SHOWCASE  
 SHOWDOWN  
 CONVERSATIONS WITH KILLERS  
 THE FUMES - WRONGHOUSE  
 FERALISTICITY  
 ALL ODDS AGAINST  
 THE BOMBSHELLS  
 THE VILLAINS MY HERO  
 BREACH OF ARMISTICE

TUE NOV 22

GROOVIE GHOULES  
 THE DOLLYROTS  
 THE COPY  
 RIGHTS  
 thee impossibles

FRI NOV 25

MY RUIN  
 CROMWELL  
 INVIDIOUS  
 PERPETUAL MADNESS  
 HEROES OF THE FEDERATION

SAT NOV 26

**PHOBIA**  
 SEVEN GENERATIONS  
 autonomy armistice

*Another Destructive System*  
 SOCIALIZED CRUCIFIXION

CONCOMBRE  
 ZOMBI  
 HAYRIDE  
 TO HELL

THU NOV 17

NO INNOCENT VICTIM  
 SYMPHONY  
 IN PERIL  
 BLOODLINED  
 CALLIGRAPHY  
 INKED IN BLOOD  
 LOOKING FORWARD

MON NOV 21

LAB RATS  
 SLAUGHTER  
 Drabs  
 LADY KILLERS  
 LUCKY STIFFS  
 WASTED SOCIETY

WED NOV 23

NEVERA  
 TEARS  
 No Bragging Rights  
 SHAUNTE CLAIR  
 The Light Season

SUN NOV 27

SHOWCASE  
 SHOWDOWN  
 SPINAL EXTRACTION  
 PLEASE DIE!  
 THE IBIS - NECROSCOPE  
 JAYSETHAN  
 AFFLIXION  
 CHAPLINS ASHORE  
 JENNA HAYZ  
 STOLEN LUNCHBOX

THE BRIEFS

Glit 45  
 NEON  
 MANIA  
 VERSE

THU DEC 1

AMERICAN  
 HEAD CHURCH  
 diecast  
 INDEXCASE  
 JAHMIE SAVAGE

FRI DEC 2

EXILE  
 LIL' LIL  
 ASYLUM  
 LENSUS  
 Unsanctified  
 RAGGAE  
 DEFEND

SAT DEC 3

MENTAL  
 BLACKLISTED  
 IRON AGE  
 LOCK  
 DOWN HERO  
 EATEN ALIVE

WED DEC 7

CRIMINE  
 ADORA  
 A DYING DREAM  
 THE HOPE  
 OF CHANGE  
 XBlood On Your HandsX

MOST PRECIOUS  
 BLOOD  
 WITH HONOR  
 MODERN LIFE IS WAR  
 DISTANCE THIS IS HELL

FRI DEC 9

REFLUX  
 ED. GEIN  
 ANIMOSITY  
 August Burns Red  
 BLACK HOLIDAY

SAT DEC 10

NAKED  
 THE EYELINERS  
 AGGRESSION  
 THE DIFES  
 ALL OR NOTHING AC  
 Die Young

MON DEC 12

EMBRACE  
 TODAY  
 SEVENTH STAR  
 DEATHSTAR  
 PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS

FRI DEC 16

KICK-OUT  
 The Guilty Parties  
 SUPER nothing  
 SOUL ROCK AFFILIATES  
 C.I.P. Torn  
 SPECIAL GUESTS

SAT DEC 17

SHOWCASE  
 SHOWDOWN  
 final round  
 TRAGIM  
 COERCE  
 BLESSED ARE THE DEAD  
 BLOOD RUNS COLD  
 LEAVE ME BROKEN  
 DEATH IS ETERNAL  
 FENMORE \* NIGLEKT

MON DEC 26

WINDS  
 OF PLAGUE  
 LIGHT THIS CITY  
 THE FUNERAL PYRE  
 ATTICHE \* PLIQUE OF SHEOL  
 Dark Haven

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GOLDSPOT • SIMON DAWES  
GRAN RONDE  
saturday november 19  
el rey theatre



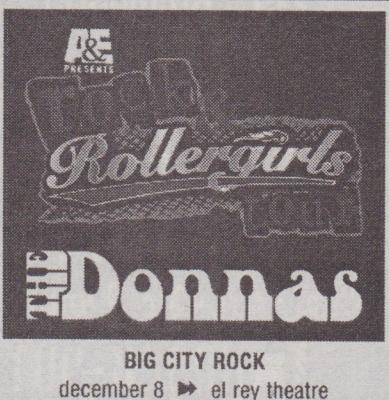
BETWEEN THE BURIED AND ME • HELLA HORSE THE BAND • THE FLASHBULB  
november 20 ► el rey theatre



november 21 ► el rey theatre



AVENGED  
SEVENFOLD  
Cities of Evil TOUR  
with special guests  
SAOSIN • DEATH BY STEREO  
BULLETS AND OCTANE  
december 1 ► bren events center uc irvine



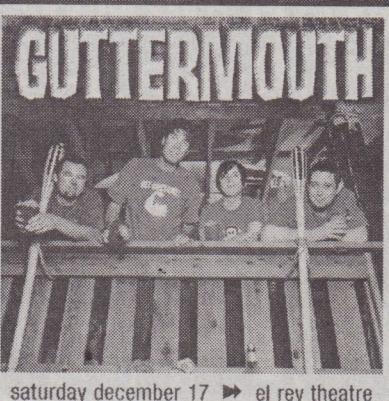
BIG CITY ROCK  
december 8 ► el rey theatre



saturday december 10 ► el rey theatre



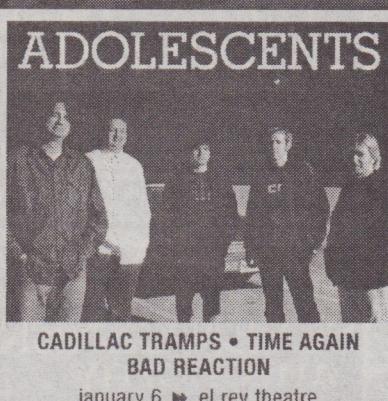
THE AQUABATS!  
VALIENT THOR • GOONS OF DOOM  
friday december 16 ► el rey theatre



saturday december 17 ► el rey theatre



WOLF PARADE  
CHAD VANGAALEN  
january 3 ► el rey theatre



ADOLESCENTS  
CADILLAC TRAMPS • TIME AGAIN  
BAD REACTION  
january 6 ► el rey theatre

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**Haste The Day**

Bedlight for Blueeyes

Scary Kids Scaring Kids

SAT-NOV 19 INDIE ROCK \$10

**Limbeck Republic**

The Color Turning

The Dane[ger]

Slings • Vavak

FRI-NOV 25 HARDCORE \$10

**Mikoto**

Calico System

Chiodos • Eudora

A Dying Memory

SAT-NOV 26 HARDCORE \$14

**THE CHARIOT**

**Evergreen Terrace**

As Cities Burn • Underminded

TUE-DEC 6 INDIE ROCK \$12

**(INTERNATIONAL)**  
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These Arms Are Snakes  
Nightmare of You

FRI-DEC 9 MYSPACE TOUR \$10

**My American Heart**

**Greeley Estates**

**A Change of Pace**

**Agent Sparks**

**The Confession**

THU-NOV 27 INDIE ROCK \$12

**The Dead 60's**

**Kill Radio • Facing New York**

FRI-NOV 28 INDIE ROCK \$10

**Number One Gun**

**Amber Pacific**

**Dead Letter Diaries**

**Takota • Junior Varsity**

SUN-NOV 20 INDIE ROCK \$12

**The New Amsterdams**

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MON-NOV 21 HARDCORE \$16

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MMVF \* TOLERANCE OF PAIN

Tues. 11/11 \* \$8

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Wed. 11/9 \* \$8

Thurs. 11/10 \* \$8

Tue. 11/15 \* \$8

Tue. 11/22 \* \$8 / \$10

Mon. 12/2 \* \$10

Wed. 12/24 \* \$10

Thurs. 11/3 \* \$8

Tue. 11/8 \* \$8

Fri. 11/11 \* \$8

Mon. 11/14 \* \$8

Sun. 11/20 \* \$8

Sun. 12/4 \* \$10

Mon. 12/26 \* \$10

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Tokyo Rose \* Adelaide

Run Home Jack \* Eightyonedays

Alexipharmac \* Robot Love

BBQ Brothers \* Non-Combatants

Best Enemy

NEAR MISS

KADDISFLY \* THE BANGKOK FIVE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

THE HENRY CLAY PEOPLE

LONG WAY FROM NOWHERE

BEFORE LONG

## The Fully Down

Maida \* Four Year Strong

Hope Departed \* Safe Haven

This Way After

A Dying Memory \* Out Of The Depths

Low Type \* Days Of Failure

To End All Battles \* Last We Remember

All The Rage

Far From Home

Morning Drive

Conversate

Andy Roo

Stolen Lunch Box

I Hate Kate

Cota (Ex-Mind Driver)

Claymore 18

Idle Discourse

SAVING DAYLIGHT

THORNLAKE

THE DRIVEBACK

DURDEN \* JATURNA

## Divide The Day

In Memory

Dreams Of Reality

Rob Carson

Five Good Reasons

Adora

Sever Your Ties

Soldiers Die Saints

Dark Lay Still

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Durden

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## NEARMISS

KADDISFLY The Bangkok Five  
Unfinished Business and more

Monday Nov. 14th

## THE FULLY DOWN

Four Year Strong

MAIDA

Hope Departed

This Way After Safe Haven

Tuesday Nov. 15th

## ALL THE RAGE

FAR FROM HOME

MORNING DRIVE

THE GUILTY PARTIES

Plus More

Tuesday, November 22nd

## COTA

Claymore 18  
Everdae  
Idle Discourse

(Former members of Mind Driver)

Tuesday, November 29th

## TERESKA CLOTHING TOUR

Strike Twelve, No One Goes Home  
And More.

Monday December 12th

## DIVIDE THE DAY

IN MEMORY Rob Carson

Dreams Of Reality

Five Good Reasons



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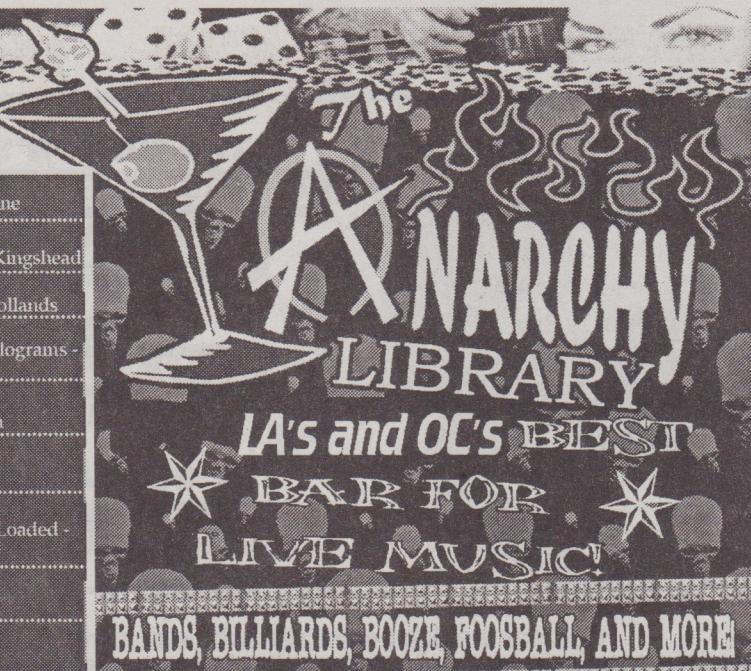
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## SHOWS

Wednesday, Nov 16	
Gitch - The Jenuifer Project - Daimon - The Pristine	
Thursday, Nov 17	
Modern Movement - Medicine Bag - My Private Hell - Kingshead	
Friday, Nov 18	
Broken Bottles - The Uprising - Wanted Dead - Mulhollands	
Saturday, Nov 19	
Frankies Broken Toys - Civet - E.A. Slumlords - The Holograms - The Hitchcock Blondes	
Monday, Nov 21	
The Unheard Of - Truth unknown - Ex-Paladin	
Tuesday, Nov 22	
Louis & The Joey G. Band	
Wednesday, Nov 23	
Beer Thieves of America - Noise Attack - Locked and Loaded - Ten count Junkey	
Thursday, Nov 24	
Arc Welders	
Friday, Nov 25	
Seven Shot Screamers - Pete - The Gallows	
Saturday, Nov 26	
Hellbound Hayride - Dead End Stiffs - Elvis Wesley and The Pistol Whippers	
Sunday, Nov 27	
Dub-8 - Just Us	
Monday, Nov 28	
The Girls Of Anarchy - Decimation	
Tuesday, Nov 29	
Louis & The Joey G. Band	
Wednesday, Nov 30	
BSS - Butt Trumpett - Dive Bar Junkies - The Wrecked	
Thursday, Dec 1	
Charged Out - 3rd String - On Switch - The Briefcase	
Friday, Dec 2	
The Fadeways - Loogie - Fuck Bunny - Temper Tantrum	
Saturday, Dec 3	
Same Day Service - Love Dolls - Sotarcade - Under The Radar - Vapor Eux	
Monday, Dec 5	
Decimation - Feedback	
Tuesday, Dec 6	
OC Toons - The Nixon Years - Milestone	
Wednesday, Dec 7	
The Resistors - Lower Class Kids	
Thursday, Dec 8	
Nothing Yet - FOIL	
Friday, Dec 9	
Ballentine - The Randies - The Misfortunes - The Switchblade Kittens - Shelby Rocks	
Saturday, Dec 10	
The Dollyrots - The Quirks	
Friday, Dec 16	
Los Creepers	
Saturday, Dec 17	
Clury Poluka and The Bar Room Junkies - Not a Chance - Caffine Scream - Donkey Punch - BSS - Mafia Rusu - Death March 7:30pm	

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Cell Block 5 - [www.CellBlock5.com](http://www.CellBlock5.com)

The Generators - [www.The-Generators.com](http://www.The-Generators.com)

The Deep Eynde - [www.DeepEynde.com](http://www.DeepEynde.com)

Junk Load - [www.MySpace.com/JunkLoad](http://www.MySpace.com/JunkLoad)

Civet - [www.DisasteRecords.com](http://www.DisasteRecords.com)

Forget The Jones - [www.ForgetTheJones.com](http://www.ForgetTheJones.com)

MindMisty - [www.MindyMisty.com](http://www.MindyMisty.com)

Ahimsa Theory - [www.AhimsaTheory.com](http://www.AhimsaTheory.com)

Empty Handed - [www.EmptyHandedMusic.com](http://www.EmptyHandedMusic.com)

The Pubes - [www.ThePubes.com](http://www.ThePubes.com)

Sex Robots - [www.RoadHouseTunes.com/SexRobots](http://www.RoadHouseTunes.com/SexRobots)

Theory of Revolution - [www.TheoryofRevolution.net](http://www.TheoryofRevolution.net)

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Avenged Sevenfold  
*Waking the Fallen*



Amber Pacific  
*The Possibility and  
the Promise*



Mural  
*The Weight of the World*



Avenged Sevenfold  
*Sounding the Seventh Trumpet*



Thrice  
*Identity Crisis*



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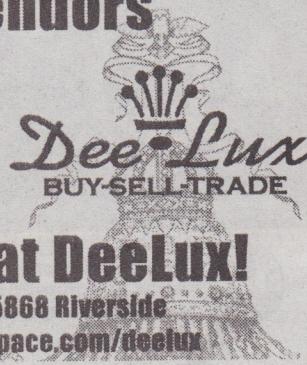
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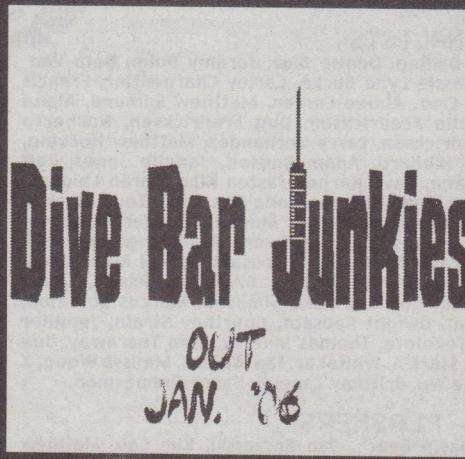
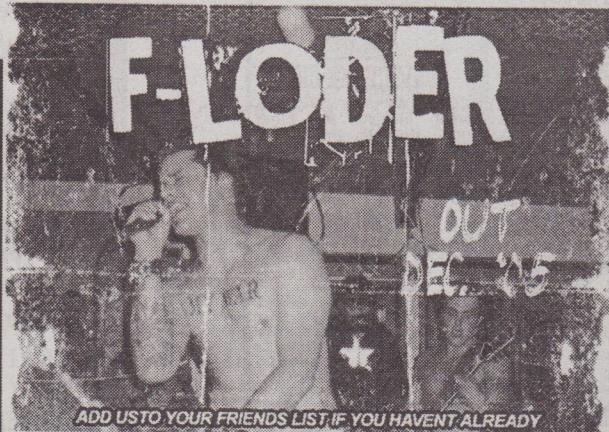
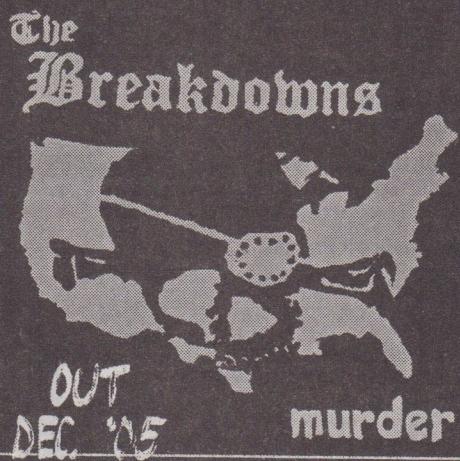
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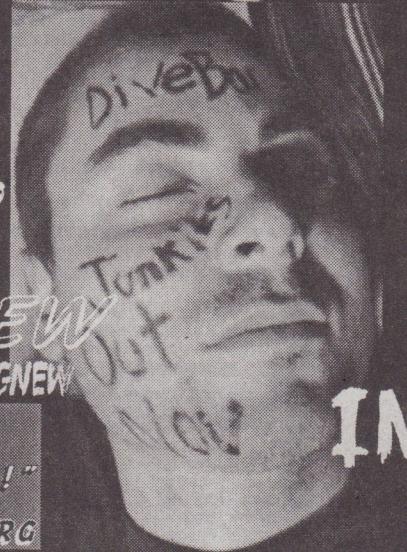
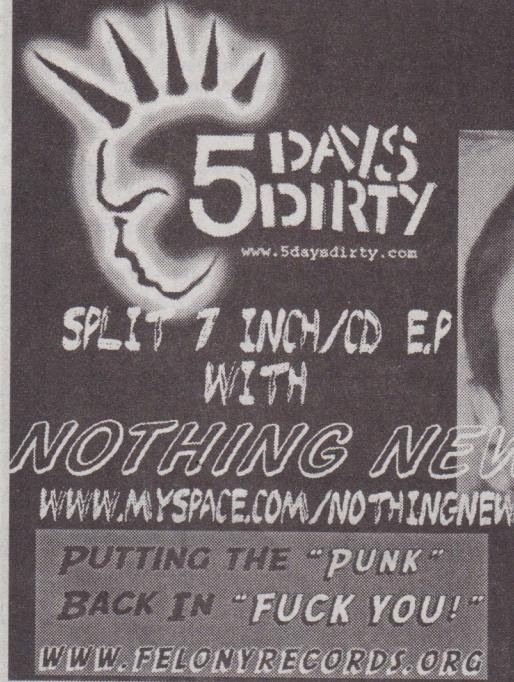
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# NIETZSCHE NEEDS MORE EGGNOG++

By Matt Wallace

The holidays draw frighteningly near. Halloween I can tolerate. There's nothing better than a gleefully grotesque celebration of all things grim and monstrous. I like to adorn myself in costumes of deceased intellectuals and artists; and as I drink more and more alcohol whilst dancing awkwardly to spooky tunes provided by The Smiths, The Blood Brothers, Hot Snakes, Cursive, Xiu Xiu, the pAper chase, and many others, the costume possesses me. Never again will I go to a Halloween party dressed as Sigmund Freud: after a few too many spirits (pun intended, unfortunately), I began to psychoanalyze other partygoers. Tell me about your dreams, I would say in an affected Austrian accent, stroking my fake gray beard thoughtfully whilst self-consciously adjusting my glasses. Then, without warning, I would glance at a fake pocket watch and announce that our session was over before moving on. This year I'll be Nietzsche. "God is dead," I shall drunkenly proclaim to bewildered poseur vampires and fair-weather zombies. "No more alcohol for Nietzsche," a phony Satan will command from the kitchen. Being an atheist and all, I shall not heed his advice.

But whenever I finally wake up November 1st, the hangover seems as though it lasts through January. With Halloween over, our always-busy little fascist consumer culture goes manic. It's time to prepare for Thanksgiving. And while we celebrate a holiday that commemorates our gratitude to God for allowing us to slay millions of indigenous people and establish repressive Puritan colonies with the excessive consumption of turkey (or tofurkey, if you're one of those people), we must also prepare frantically for Christmas. Once a religious holiday, the good corporations that gave us microwaves, atom bombs, and reality TV co-opted and secularized Christmas so that everyone—atheists, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Scientologists, Muslims, Wiccans, pantheists, Satanists, and Freemasons—can succumb equally to the flesh-eating pandemic that department stores call Christmas spirit.

Christmas lights blind me. Christmas carols make my ears bleed. Santa Claus—surrounded by snarling, bloodied, carnivorous reindeer—sneers and devours cookie after cookie in my nightmares, laughing, always laughing. And he's always watching, too. Haven't you heard the song? He can see me in the shower. Why would Santa want to see me in the shower? I'm not doing anything naughty in the shower. Well, not usually. But that's not the point. Someone needs to stop this man—if he is a man.

Every time I go into a shopping mall, I throw up a little in my mouth but swallow it so as not to disturb fellow shoppers, some of whom go about the task of mindless consumption with considerable zeal, swaddled in tacky Christmas sweaters and dragging their screaming children into department stores, the poor kids wailing as though they were being led to certain doom. The reality is that they don't know it yet, but they are. It must be some kind of survival instinct that eventually gets ground down by TV commercials and public education. Speaking of department stores: ever notice how, upon entering a one, you're sucker-punched with the amalgamated scent of a hundred perfumes? I think they put some kind of nerve agents in that shit, something to heighten the appetite for useless material goods. That's probably why it's so expensive. And also probably why every time I go into a department store I have an irrational urge to buy a new set of 300-count Egyptian cotton bed sheets or a new set of luggage. This is, of course, after I buy Christmas gifts for those people who managed to stay on my list of people to give Christmas gifts to.

I get stares from fellow shoppers when I show up at the mall in a gas mask. (Nerve agents, remember?) Believe me, though, it's worth the trouble, should you have to venture inside some colossal indoor cathedral of yuppie idolatry—because, hey, it's all on sale, right? Earplugs help, too, should you need to do Christmas shopping. You don't have to listen to anything except your own heartbeat, pounding faster and faster until you're convinced it will finally explode. (Woefully, it doesn't.)

I'd boycott Christmas, if it would actually do any good. But this would make Santa very, very angry. And it would piss off a lot of people in my family, too, who would receive an eloquent handwritten manifesto denouncing the corporate gentrification of a once-solemn religious holiday in lieu of a gift. So I just grit my teeth and try to bear it. The weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas remind me of a month-long root canal performed by an unlicensed dentist who smells eerily of peppermint and pine trees. (This happened to me once. I'd rather not talk about it. But a word of advice: do not go to Boy Scout camp. This is only one of many horrors a person can suffer there.)

So pour yourself a glass of spiked eggnog and dig your foxholes, kids: it's going to be a long winter. And come to think of it, maybe I ought to just leave my Halloween costume on until sometime after New Year's Day. I'm sure Nietzsche would have hated Christmas as much as I do. "Bah fucking humbug, children," he would say, "God is dead." And then he would say: "Just put a little more rum in that eggnog. A little more. Just a little...Perfect. Thanks, man. Hey, are there any Christmas cookies left? You know—the ones that look like Christmas trees with the green, crunchy sprinkles? Damn, those little bastards are tasty."

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## CAVE IN

Cave In  
Interview by Denise Blaz  
Photos by Luke Scarola

Stephen Brodsky, lead singer of Cave In, is one fucking cool dude. Having started the band when he was a mere 15 years of age, the band has been together for 10 years now, despite some lineup changes along the way. And now, after being in the majors for a while, they are now back with an indie label, Hydra Head. A month ago, the band released *PERFECT PITCH BLACK*, a CD that serves as a dynamic return to the sound that they're best known for. It's a definite change from their previous album, *ANTENNA*.

(A sidenote: I had to do this interview via speakerphone, and my recorder was placed WAY too close to my phone, creating an obnoxious buzzing sound on my tape. Here is what I was able to salvage out of our 30-minute conversation.)

**SKRATCH:** Your album has been out for a little over a month now. How has the response been?  
**STEPHEN:** It's been pretty positive, which is kind of a relief, because you never know how people will react to it.

**SKRATCH:** What's your favorite heavy-metal band?  
**STEPHEN:** What's your favorite heavy-metal band?

**SKRATCH:** I'm not really into heavy metal music. That's a tough one.

**STEPHEN:** You can't think of one heavy-metal band that you like?

**SKRATCH:** No, not off the top of my head. I think I might have to look through my CDs.

**STEPHEN:** Well, I think my favorite heavy-metal band of all time would probably be *Anal Cunt*.

**SKRATCH:** Why?

**STEPHEN:** They just have the ultimate level of punk rock in heavy metal. The singer is really attractive, too.

**SKRATCH:** I read something where Caleb said that playing heavy metal got you guys laid more. I thought that was funny.

**STEPHEN:** [Laughs] Well, not to be too blunt on things....

**SKRATCH:** On this tour the venues are going to be scaled down a bit, as far as size. Do you like playing at the smaller venues?

**STEPHEN:** We've played some shows where [unintelligible].

**SKRATCH:** Like the Foo Fighters tour? I saw you guys three times on that tour.

**STEPHEN:** Really? That's cool.

**SKRATCH:** What did you gain out of that experience?

**STEPHEN:** I think we all gained about five pounds from the amount of alcohol we drank.

**SKRATCH:** What significance does the album title "*PERFECT PITCH BLACK*" have?

STEPHEN: It was just something that I just pulled out of a notebook one day. It was originally the title of the song "Off to Ruin".

SKRATCH: Do you write down your lyrics in a notebook?

STEPHEN: Yeah, sometimes. Sometimes I write them on a part of my body or something, if I don't have a piece of paper around. I've done that before.

SKRATCH: So, you get inspired in random places?

STEPHEN: It's hard to come up with stuff sometimes. It might be kind of nice to listen to a jukebox in a club

STEPHEN: Okay, so you mean frontperson, then?

SKRATCH: Yeah, sure.

STEPHEN: You see, there's a difference. [Laughs] I can't describe my favorite frontperson-but I'll tell you who my favorite frontperson was a year ago.

SKRATCH: Okay.

STEPHEN: That would be Alan Vega of Suicide. Do you know who Suicide is?

SKRATCH: No.

STEPHEN: Okay, well, Suicide was this band from New York in the late

'70s. They were punk rock to the punk rockers. Suicide was considered, like, the real deal-gritty, nasty shit-by the punk rockers. It was totally weird and tripped out; and they would play at seriously deafening volumes. I always like the punk rock of the punk rock, you know? If you get their first record, you will be amazed.

SKRATCH: I will definitely check it out. Where do you guys live?

STEPHEN: Adam and I live in Massachusetts, Caleb lives in L.A., and Ben lives in New York. We're bicoastal. It's good for selling units.

SKRATCH: Ben is a pretty recent addition to your band. When did he join?

STEPHEN: Ben started playing in Cave In this past summer.

SKRATCH: What does he bring to the band?

STEPHEN: Sick fucking drumming madness. He's awesome. He has an unbelievable sense of timing and feel. He just has a great attitude about playing an instrument: he loves it, and he just wants to play all the time. It's like a new fire.

SKRATCH: Can you tell me a random fact about yourself?

## "ANYTHING. GEEZ. YOU'VE GOT TO NARROW IT DOWN FOR ME."

or a bar and listen to something that you might not have in your own CD collection-stuff like that: stimulation that's unexpected.

SKRATCH: As far as your song-writing process, do you come up with things really fast, do you take your time, or does it vary?

STEPHEN: It varies. Sometimes things come fairly quickly, but sometimes I labor over things.

SKRATCH: Who's your favorite lead singer of a band?

STEPHEN: You mean like a singer who doesn't play an instrument, who just does lead vocals?

SKRATCH: I guess that doesn't have to apply.



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STEPHEN: Let's see... I really want to get really random for you here. That's tough. I'm stretching my brain here. I'm stretching it out and taking a look to try to figure out something nice and random. I went to an army/navy store today in Watertown. The random fact: the last time that I visited this army/navy store, I spent less money than I did this time.

SKRATCH: Do you have a favorite song that you love to play?

STEPHEN: I really love to play "Patience" by Guns N' Roses. I always love to play that song, because it's the first song that I learned how to play straight through.

SKRATCH: I'm talking about yours.

STEPHEN: Oh, a Cave In song: I love playing "Big Riff".

SKRATCH: What do you think is the best part about where you live?

STEPHEN: I live with my cousin. We go way back-you know: were cousins. We've been really close for a long time and we're about the same age (one month apart). It's a good living situation we've got going here. I'm kind of a slob and I'm not always the most courteous, when it comes to being around the apartment-but he's very forgiving about that. He will point out if I'm doing something gross, like leaving hair in the sink. I don't do it on purpose. He'll be really cool and just matter-of-fact about it. No bullshit, you know? He's a good dude.

SKRATCH: Would you like to tell me about your solo stuff?

STEPHEN: Sure. What do you want to know?

SKRATCH: Anything, pretty much.

STEPHEN: Anything. Geez. You've got to narrow it down for me.

SKRATCH: Okay. Well, who are you working with?

STEPHEN: I've done some stuff with Kenneth from Scissorfist. Do you like Scissorfist at all? Have you heard of them?

SKRATCH: No. I feel really odd. You keep on naming these bands that I have no idea about.

STEPHEN: No way. That's okay-you shouldn't feel odd about that. Check them out. Maybe you'll like them. They're sort of a cult band, in a lot of ways. That band is just sick.

It's just like marching, stomping, heavy, awesome rock.

SKRATCH: This is my last question: Do you have a favorite band name?

STEPHEN: Totally. "Blind Drunken Driver." Thank you very much for your time. That was pretty fun.

SKRATCH: Was it?

STEPHEN: Yeah, it was a good interview. Were you into it?

SKRATCH: Yeah, I was.

STEPHEN: Cool. Is it tough doing other interviews that you do?

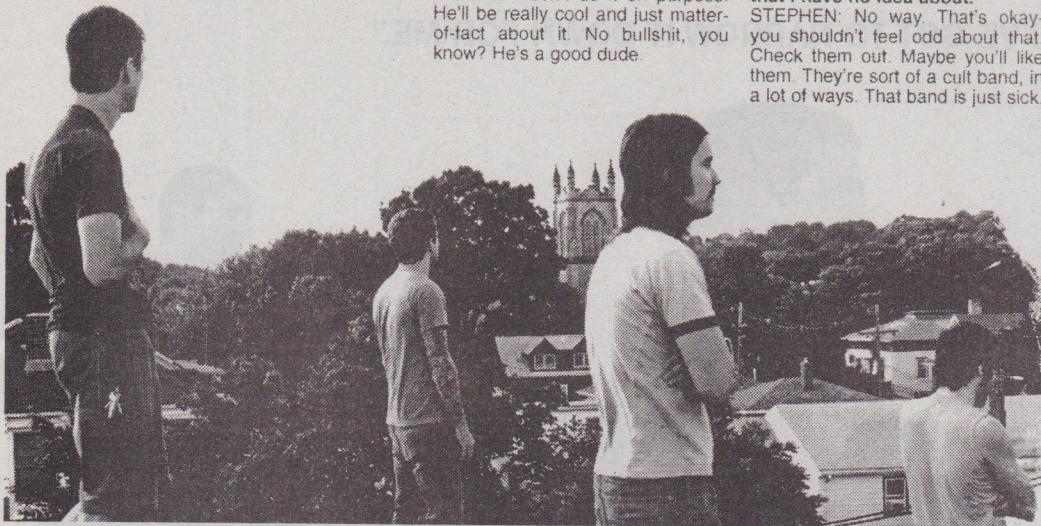
SKRATCH: Yeah. I've learned to never expect anything.

STEPHEN: Who's been your favorite person to interview?

SKRATCH: Well, I really love Chris Shiflett. I interviewed him once.

STEPHEN: Oh, you're supposed to say me. [Laughs] No, that's cool.

Stephen, if you're reading this, you definitely surpass Chris Shiflett. For more information on Cave In-including dates for the tour that is set to start in November-check out their Myspace page at [www.myspace.com/cavein](http://www.myspace.com/cavein) or, stream their entire new album on [www.perfectpitchblack.com](http://www.perfectpitchblack.com).



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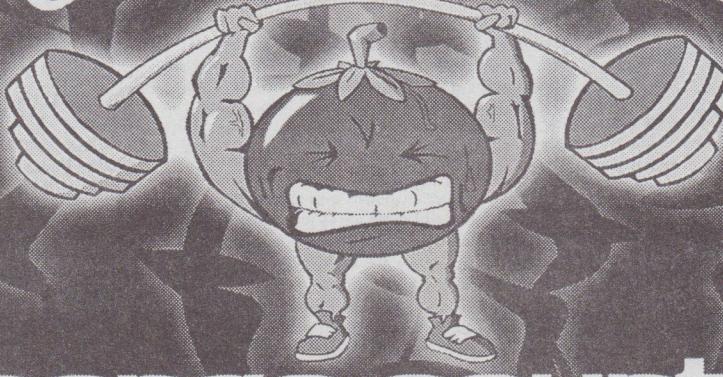
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## ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN

By Marcia Taylor

Electric Frankenstein began its mission about 30 years ago in New Jersey—a mission to save rock 'n' roll. The media had declared it dead, so someone had to bring it back to life (just like someone

band, and now they have their own bands. The Hives listened to us when they were young, and they thank us for that on their record. We wanted to nurture a scene, not just be a rock band.

**SKRATCH:** So, you're a rock band?

**CANZONIERI:** It all comes from Washington, DC, when Minor Threat became Fugazi. The Rites of Spring and all those bands, they used to cry when they sang. It came out of there, that look, that sound.

**SKRATCH:** That could be. You know what I've

coming out. I've been working on it for the last two years. It's all the best stuff that's been done for the *FISTFUL OF ROCK* series of records. It's another way of showing that rock 'n' roll is still alive.

**SKRATCH:** So the artwork in the book is fan art?

# ELECTRICFRANKENSTEIN

brought their namesake back to life). And so they began their quest, and they've had a helluva lot of fun and adventure doing it. They've traveled the world playing their music. They've released an art book that compiles all of the posters and record covers created for the band, and now they've released a new CD on a disc that contains Internet links to all their sponsors' Websites that paid the cost of recording the disc and their touring expenses for a year.

Want to learn more? Continue reading and see what rhythm guitarist Sal Canzonieri has to say about the band, the music business, AND what he sees as the future of rock 'n' roll.

**SKRATCH:** I understand that your new disc is made up of songs that you'd saved over the years—like, one song from each record you worked on. Is this true? **CANZONIERI:** We had the preliminary version of each song, and then we went back over the tape, playing it as we would if we'd written it today. We had kept these songs because in the past we'd say, "This is too good for this label" or "That's too good for that label." We knew we'd need good songs later, because we weren't in it for the short haul. We had a whole [vision]: the revitalization of rock 'n' roll. We got popular quickly in New York and with the press. And we encouraged people all over the country to start their own bands. Then I started doing the compilations, *FISTFUL OF ROCK*. We had contests for the bands who wanted to be on them. We helped to build a whole new scene (along with The Dwarves and New Bomb Turks). We had kids writing to us about our

**CANZONIERI:** Rock and punk. AC/DC meets Dead Boys. That's what people want to hear now. Everyone is going back to their record collection. It's the '70s being revitalized, really. Right now, the little kids—the 10-/11-/12-year-olds—love rock. They love Led Zeppelin, Kiss, The Ramones, AC/DC.... It's all rock 'n' roll now. Those other bands, like Good Charlotte and Blink 182, they're pop bands, NOT rock. There's an even funnier, weirder thing going on: there's a new crop of people into Motley Crue; they're adding the early '80s hair bands into the mix.

**SKRATCH:** Well, I think that the '70s thing is very big these days. My daughter who's 17 wears all these '70s-looking clothes. All these places sell them. And she likes those classic rock bands. My daughter who's 20, she's into the whole emo thing, which is totally different—not happy.

**CANZONIERI:** Yeah, the emo kids, their music is like a reaction to the darker metal music they grew up listening to—their version of Slipknot. The new metal is very depressing, not like old metal (like Motorhead). It's kind of atonal, too.

**SKRATCH:** Well, I think emo was a lot of guys reacting against the macho stereotype of the later punk, particularly the straight-edge, hardcore type of bands. They're all about NOT having shaved heads and being manly and going in the pit; they WANT to have shaggy hair and dress like Mr. Rogers and be sensitive. It's just a swing of the pendulum away from punk values.

**SKRATCH:** noticed? It's that with music and fashion, things don't change at the beginning and the end of each decade; rather, whatever is popular becomes fully accepted and mainstream at the middle of each decade—and then new stuff starts coming up after that that is starting to be accepted by the beginning of the next decade, and then plays out around the middle of the next decade, when something new begins again. Of course, all the past stuff gets mixed in with the new stuff.

**CANZONIERI:** Yeah. In '56, you had all kinds of rock 'n' roll and rockabilly everywhere. Then in '66, the garage bands and British Invasion thing peaked. Then in '76, you had the beginnings of American and British punk. And in '96, grunge peaked and was huge.

**SKRATCH:** Do you guys consider yourself an East Coast band?

**CANZONIERI:** We're an international band. We play all over the U.S., Canada, and Europe at least once or twice a year. But growing up and living in New Jersey, people there were very influenced by the Orange County [CA] and L.A. bands—whereas in New York people were very influenced by the San Francisco bands. There's that San Francisco/New York connection. That's why we did a record with Rik L. Rik.

**SKRATCH:** Electric Frankenstein has a book. Tell me about that.

**CANZONIERI:** It's a big, 200-page art book. We're the only band that has ever done this. It's a compendium of every piece of art done for us—posters from our first show to our last show, then record covers. There's a sequel

**CANZONIERI:** In a way. It's by famous people who are fans of the band. I did the art, at first. But Frankenstein is an American icon. In fact, America IS Frankenstein: he's made of all different body parts and, although he doesn't mean to hurt people, he goes lumbering all over the place stepping on them. And a lot of people grow up drawing Frankenstein. Coop, Kozik, they contacted us; they wanted to do cover art for us. I curated our stuff, kept a copy of everything. I included some fan drawings in the margins, because fans are the most important. When we started, we said we'd do this until the fans didn't want us to anymore.

**SKRATCH:** Tell me about this thing you did with your new disc: putting the sponsor ads/links on it.

**CANZONIERI:** That's another history-making thing. I've always liked monster and horror films. There's a big horror-movie convention in New Jersey. People come from all over the world. I've gotten to know them. The people who make these movies don't go through Hollywood, so I decided I'd to do the record like they do their movies. We made a record cover and poster before the record even existed. Then we went to people who are friends of the band-toy companies, clothing companies like *Lucky 13* and told them that we were going to do it like that, and they grabbed the idea right away. In fact, we made \$15,000 in the first week alone with the sponsorships. We made enough money that we were able to record in a big, grand studio. We have 10 guitar tracks, 10 drum tracks. It created a really big sound—but not a commercial one. We wanted the sound to be big and ferocious.

cious. We ended up with enough money to go on tour for a year with all the expenses paid.

**SKRATCH:** What do you see for the future of rock 'n' roll?

**CANZONIERI:** Every time people predict that rock 'n' roll is going to die, it comes back as a hybrid that incorporates something new. We've been on the Internet since it began. I remember when there were only 10 Websites-and they were all rock bands. From the early '90s, we were getting responses from Vietnam, Serbia, Uzbekistan.... We'd give them free mp3s, because there was no way they could buy records where they were,



we're doing a DVD of all of our videos. And two years from now, a "best of" album. All the songs will be animated by different artists-because it doesn't make any sense to put out a CD when a DVD costs the same. There will be cartoons of each song, and the cartoons will illustrate the lyrics. It will be like a live version of our books. It will be done in Flash, because that will let you import the artwork and then animate it. We also have a video game that we've scripted.

**SKRATCH:** Wow. You must never sleep! It's wonderful that you have so many different interests and are able to pursue them all in such a productive way!

## "IT'S ANOTHER WAY OF SHOWING THAT ROCK 'N' ROLL IS STILL ALIVE."

and also just for the idea of being a missionary for rock 'n' roll. We can play in Spain and draw 5,000 people to a show because of the Internet. I've been playing in bands since '75. The club thing is dying out. People have more choices of things to do and have found other ways to meet people. And young people today are media-oriented. Right now, people are building

hologram systems for bands to do live engagements all over the world. You should see these things! Until you put your hand through them, it really looks like they're playing. Wherever you play, you can project your image all over the world. There's an eight-laser system that does a whole 360-degree effect. It's all here-it just needs investors. And the people who

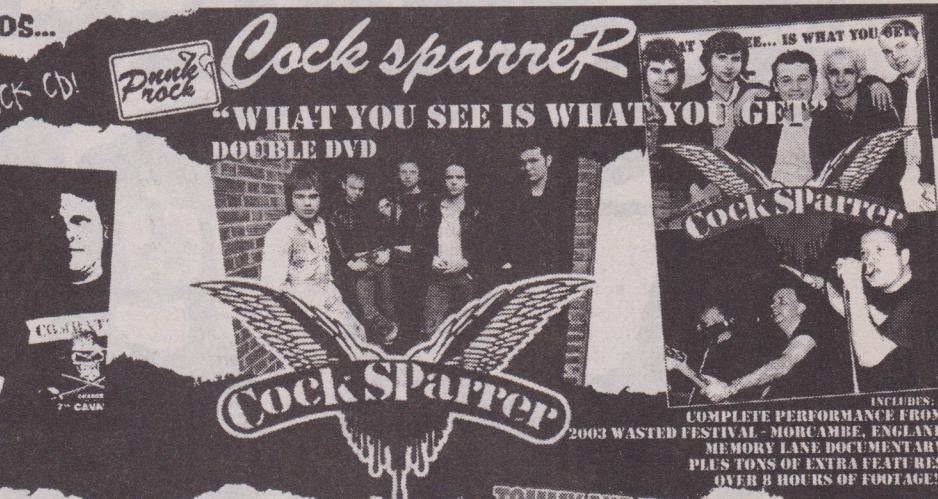
are investing in it now are the porn people. Live sex acts will make them millions. And then the next thing after porn, following right behind: music. And it'll be the punk bands and rock bands that do it first.

**SKRATCH:** What is Electric Frankenstein working on now?

**CANZONIERI:** The next book. It will be 500 pages. Next year

**CANZONIERI:** I do artwork, consulting, write articles and columns for magazines, and I do and teach martial arts. I grew up believing that you DO what you can for the world, not take from it. That's why I do music: the more you give, the more you get.

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Nashville Pussy  
By Mark A. Whitaker

Nashville Pussy play some hard-charged Southern rock, their songs chock full of lightning-fast riffs by husband and wife team Blaine Cartwright and Ruyter Suys. Written in a descriptive narrative format, Nashville Pussy's songs are entertaining and hilarious, and their live shows will leave you breathless, as the music is fast and furious, making the obligatory circle pit mandatory.

I caught up with Ruyter via phone as the band headed into Wisconsin touring in support of their latest album, the appropriately-titled GET SOME.

**SKRATCH: How is the tour going?**

RYTER: The tour's been going really good. We're rocking our asses off.

**SKRATCH: How did you get started playing guitar? What were your influences?**

RYTER: There was one in the house, so I picked it up. Influences were my parents, Simon and Garfunkel, Frank Zappa, The Beatles, Jefferson Airplane...My mom was a big Zeppelin fan.

**SKRATCH: What made you and Blaine decide to start Nashville Pussy?**

RYTER: Mostly boredom, nothing going on that was very challenging.

**SKRATCH: How many years has Nashville Pussy been playing for?**

RYTER: Eight-and-a-half years now.

**SKRATCH: Did the recent Hurricane Katrina flooding affect you?**

RYTER: No: we had cancelled all our tours there. (All our New Orleans fans ended up being okay.)

**SKRATCH: How do you approach the writing of a new album?**

RYTER: Basically, we're always writing. Blaine is the songwriter and is always writing music.

**SKRATCH: In some of the songs, it seems like Blaine is singing directly to you (e.g., "You Ain't Right" and "Go to Hell"), and yet you play the chorus. The songs don't bother you?**

RYTER: I don't mind at all. I take them with a grain of salt. There's nothing worse than life imitating art.

**SKRATCH: The one that I find amusing is "Blowjob from a Rattlesnake". Was that when you and Blaine were still dating?**

RYTER: [Laughs] We were actually married at that point. We heard that story from someone.

**SKRATCH: I truly like your music. It seems like your albums are getting deeper. On SAY SOMETHING NASTY and GET SOME, they are like a fine whiskey: they get better with age. Would you say your albums are getting deeper?**

RYTER: They're slowly getting better. We're actually learning to play. It's like a musician's vacation, going into the studio.

**SKRATCH: There has been a rumor that "You Give Dugs a Bad Name" was written about your former bass player Corey Parks. Any truth to that?**

RYTER: Yeah, totally. Most of it is true.

**SKRATCH: How many bass players have you gone through?**

RYTER: [We've had a new one on] almost every record. Tracey quit right after SAY SOMETHING NASTY was done being recorded. It takes a certain kind of person to do this shit.

**SKRATCH: Ho did you meet up with Karen Cuda?**

RYTER: Met her through Frank from Street Walkin Cheetahs. She knows all our friends. She is on hiatus from Hemicuda (while one of the guitarists had a baby).

**SKRATCH: Are you excited about touring again?**

RYTER: The record is doing really good, so everybody wants us in different places at the same time.

**SKRATCH: Are you going to be playing any New Year's shows in Hollywood this year? The one at the Whiskey a few years ago was a blast.**

RYTER: We're playing the Knitting Factory and the Malibu Inn in mid November. No plans for New Year's yet. We'll see who comes up with the best offer. We'll play anywhere. We'll even play Oxnard.

For more information, tour dates, and to see if Nashville Pussy will be playing in Oxnard, go to [www.NashvillePussy.com](http://www.NashvillePussy.com).

# NASHVILLE PUSSY



"IT'S LIKE A MUSICIAN'S VACATION, GOING INTO THE STUDIO"

# Lagwagon

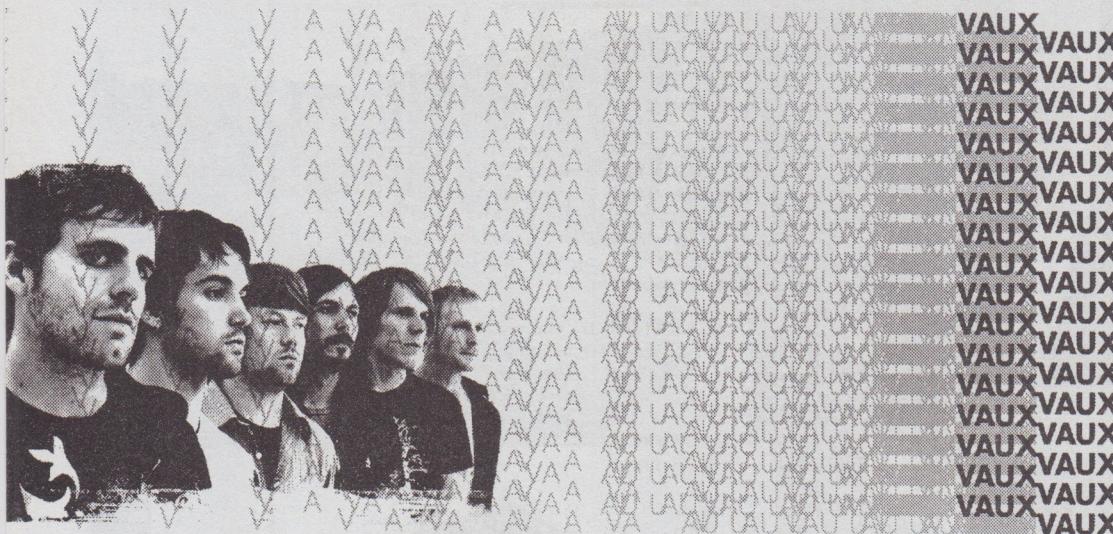
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## Vaux

Interview by Denise Blaz

Vaux is a band that puts their heart and soul into their music. They've been around for seven years-with the same members, a remarkable accomplishment. They just inked a deal with a major (Atlantic/Lava) and are now on a roster alongside such bands as Simple Plan, Embrace, and Kid Rock. BEYOND VIRTUE, BEYOND VICE hits stores on November 8th. In the words of lead singer Quentin Smith, "This should be the year where we try to take over. We'll see what happens."

**SKRATCH:** Hey, Quentin. How has your day been?

**QUENTIN:** I just went to the supermarket and bought some groceries. It was pretty intense.

**SKRATCH:** When do you guys start your tour?

**QUENTIN:** We are going to be starting up our tour in two weeks.

**SKRATCH:** Your CD is coming out on November 8th. Are you anxious about it coming out?

**QUENTIN:** Yeah. It was about a year ago that we recorded it, so all of us can't wait for it to come out. We can't wait to start touring again. It's been a long time.

**SKRATCH:** You guys are so used to touring, right?

**QUENTIN:** Yeah. [The lack of touring lately] has been a change for all of us, that's for sure.

**SKRATCH:** So, just being at home isn't all that exciting for you?

**QUENTIN:** It's been just as busy just taking care of the artwork and making sure that the right things are happening. There's so much to worry about that I almost wish that we could be out on tour. So yeah, it's definitely been different; but I think it's healthy to have some time off.

**SKRATCH:** Do you do all the artwork for the CDs?

**QUENTIN:** Yeah. To this point, the band has been in control of that-which is cool, but it's a lot of work. It doesn't really have a whole lot to do with music. At the same time, it's nice to be part of the whole vision of the band.

**SKRATCH:** You guys self-released your first album, then went to Volcom, then to Equal Vision, and now you're on Lava, right? Why were there so many changes?

**QUENTIN:** I think it's Atlantic/Lava. I don't know. They switch it back and forth every other day, so I'm not even sure anymore. We're just happy it's coming out this year. It was just a series of events. With the EP, we just really wanted to work with Equal Vision.

**SKRATCH:** Aren't they known for more hardcore bands?

**"IT WAS MIND NUMBING STUFF, SO WE DECIDED TO JUST GIVE IT A SHOT."**

QUENTIN: Well, they have a lot of bands now, and they always have [carried bands that are] across the board. The songs on the EP were a bit more eclectic so we thought that that avenue made a bit more sense than that having that come out on Atlantic or Lava. But now for the full-length, we switched it back over. I think we're in a good place, because I think we have a lot of support from the label; and they've let us do what we want to do with the music.

SKRATCH: I read that you got your name from a Morrissey album.

QUENTIN: Yeah. It's impossible to pick a band name—especially if you have six members in your band. Then to find a band name that is short that hasn't been taken is also a pain in the ass.

SKRATCH: You guys were named Eiffel before Vaux, right?

QUENTIN: Yeah. It's still all the same people, but we had to change our name because there was a band in France [called Eiffel].

SKRATCH: So Vaux is the one that stuck.

QUENTIN: Yes, because it was short and we liked the way it sounded.

SKRATCH: Was there just a breaking point where you realized you just wanted to be in the band full-time?

QUENTIN: All of us were in college when we met, and when we started the band, half of us were in 9-to-5, career-type jobs in the field that we graduated from. We would e-mail back and forth and say, "This is so fucking boring." It was mind-numbing stuff, so we decided to just give it a shot. We were like, Let's just see how far we can take it. I can't believe that we're at this point and that we have this record. It's exciting.

SKRATCH: You started the band in 1997. What are some things that you've learned about the guys over the last eight years?

QUENTIN: There are a million things. I think we know each other just about as well as you can know somebody. But more than anything, we've learned how to communicate. Like, any disagreements we might have, whether it's personal or musical, we now deal with it in a civilized way. It used to be [that there might be] like a week where someone in the band wouldn't be talking as much and then after that they would kind of blow up and lash out at everyone. We don't really have that problem anymore. That's good.

SKRATCH: Did you guys all finish school?

QUENTIN: Yeah, we all graduated from college. Some of us even have multiple degrees. I think that's pretty unusual.

SKRATCH: You guys are sponsored by Red Bull?

QUENTIN: Yeah. They send us cases of that stuff. When we're on tour, we try to pass cans of Red Bull through our car window to people. We found that many people are not willing to accept a drink from one car to another; but every once and a while we will get someone who's

excited. It's hilarious. We have so much of it. At this point, we've kind of weaned ourselves off of it a bit; but when the tour starts up, we're going to have to crack open some. Oh, when we got that endorsement our guitarist, Adam, drank like half a case of it in an hour, and he was just out of it. He was shaking. It's not a good idea [to drink so much], but we have to do a lot of driving, and it helps a lot.

SKRATCH: What is your first musical memory?

QUENTIN: As a family, we always used to listen to books on tape rather than to music. But when my brother and I were little, my parents used to put records on to go to bed to. If we were good, we got to listen to Bill Cosby records, but if we were bad we had to listen to INTO THE WOODS or PETER AND THE WOLF on record.

SKRATCH: Do you have a favorite record right now?

QUENTIN: The new Sigur Ros record is awesome. I just saw them the other night in New York. They really thought about creating an atmosphere. It was mind-blowing.

SKRATCH: Do you remember the first time you were on stage?

QUENTIN: Yeah: I was in a band in New Jersey during high school. We only played one show. I could either go to the prom or play that concert, and I was like, Fuck the prom. [The show] was with some great bands that I just loved, and I was freaking nervous as hell. I remember that after we finished, I just had so much adrenaline going. I was nervous as hell. I still get nervous.

SKRATCH: I think that's a good thing.

QUENTIN: Yeah, I think so, too.

SKRATCH: Can you tell me a random fact about yourself?

QUENTIN: I just played paintball on Sunday. It was like 200 people attacking 400 people in a castle.

SKRATCH: Do those things hurt?

QUENTIN: No, not so much this time. I was doing some "delta force"-type of stuff. Chuck Norris would have been impressed.

SKRATCH: Who are some of your favorite bands?

QUENTIN: I really like the new Elbow record. I like the latest Mindless Self Indulgence CD—but I like all their records. I listen to Blood Brothers a lot still. I think my dog likes their CD. That's probably his favorite CD—which is good, because I like my dog a lot.

SKRATCH: Does he react to it?

QUENTIN: Yeah. I think he can relate to it better than to other music because he's pretty high-strung.

Vaux is now currently on tour with The Letters Organize. Check out their Website: [www.vauxrock.com](http://www.vauxrock.com).

The Audition  
By Audiophile

The Audition are a rock band from that little-known part of Illinois called Chicago. Perhaps you've heard of it. This Victory Records pop-punk/rock band are currently touring and enjoying the release of their debut album, *CONTROVERSY LOVES COMPANY*, in the company of some spectacular acts such as Spitalfield and City on Film; and they have just finished an awesome tour with one of my favorite bands,

it. We also agreed that it fit because every time we play a show, we are basically auditioning for you, the fans.

**SKRATCH:** Do you guys think of yourselves as "the next big thing" (as your bio states)?

**RYAN:** [Laughs] Well, not really. It would be really amazing if people picked up on our music, but we don't really think about it that much.

**RYAN:** I guess, but I don't really put a label on our music. But if you wanted to label us, I'd call us pop/rock.

**SKRATCH:** What were some of your favorite things to do back in Chicago?

**RYAN:** Hang out with friends, hang down in the city, party, write music, and enjoy all of the good Chicago has. [Laughs]

**SKRATCH:** Do you still do these things at home when not touring?



## theAudition

Rock Kills Kid. (God, I love that band.) I like The Audition, as well. They're catchy, they're rocking, and drummer Ryan O'Connor is a great guy for doing this interview twice. (We won't go into why twice.)

**SKRATCH:** So why the name "The Audition"?

**RYAN:** A while back we had to change our name, so we were brainstorming ideas, and "The Audition" came up. We thought it was clever and unheard-of, so we decided to use

**SKRATCH:** Was your debut release, *CONTROVERSY LOVES COMPANY*, all that you expected it to be?

**RYAN:** We all are very pleased with how the record came out; we honestly couldn't ask for more. Our producer, John Naclerio, was great, and we all vibed well, so I couldn't be any happier.

**SKRATCH:** Do you guys think of yourselves as pop-punk?

**RYAN:** Eh, well, we don't do much on tour but drive, play, sleep, and eat. There isn't much downtime.

**SKRATCH:** You guys lost your original singer a month after getting signed. How did that affect the band? Was it a good or a bad change for you at the time?

**RYAN:** We lost a good friend, but it all worked out for the best for both us and him. I think it helped shape the way the record turned out—I think in a good way.

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SKRATCH: What's your favorite band that you've worked with?

RYAN: Well, we have really toured with a lot of bands, but I'd have to say I Am the Avalanche or Aiden. Both bands are amazing and have great guys.

SKRATCH: What's one thing you'd like someone who's never heard your music before to know before they take a listen?

RYAN: That The Audition is a fun band. We love having a good time, and our music portrays that.

*"...nothing more than a little shit-talking to each other."*

RYAN: Yeah, it was great. We love doing interviews and answering questions for the fans, so whatever way we can keep in touch with the fans the best, we take advantage of. And I think Idobi is a great show.

SKRATCH: You guys are out on tour again, right? How's that going for you?

RYAN: Amazing. We love being on the road and getting our music out there to everyone. We grew up always wanting to tour, so it's nice to do it every night across the country.

Chicago, because that's where we are from, but it's amazing to see kids from 1,000 miles away who know the words to your songs!

SKRATCH: Do you guys tour in a van or in a bus?

RYAN: We have toured only in a van. We are going to keep it that way for a long time. We don't deserve the luxury of a bus.

SKRATCH: Do you have any favorite new bands/albums that you've discovered this year?

RYAN: I Am the Avalanche, The Junior Varsity, Motion City Soundtrack, October Fall, and Aiden. Go check them out now.

SKRATCH: What do you think you'll be doing for Christmas this year?

RYAN: I'll be getting home December 22nd from tour, so I'll probably be shopping for presents on Christmas Eve. [Laughs]

SKRATCH: What's the perfect Christmas gift for someone to get you?

RYAN: Honestly, I don't really need gifts. I love giving them, but it's not a big deal. But if you wanted to get me something, I'd love a new iPod! [Laughs]

SKRATCH: Do any of the members of your band play pranks on the other members?

RYAN: Not really; we just mess around with each other a lot. Nothing more than a little shit-talking to each other. [Laughs]

Be sure to check out The Audition at [www.theauditionrocks.com](http://www.theauditionrocks.com) and add them to your Myspace at [www.myspace.com/theaudition](http://www.myspace.com/theaudition).

SKRATCH: Do you have any resolutions for the new year? It's coming up sooner than you think, you know.

RYAN: Um, I don't believe in that shit. Every time I make a resolution, I never stick to it. [Laughs]

SKRATCH: I heard that you guys recently went onto the Idobi radio show. How was that? Did you have fun?

SKRATCH: What's your favorite tour so far? What made it your favorite?

RYAN: Our most recent tour with I Am the Avalanche, Paramore, and Rock Kills Kid. All the bands are amazing and have great people, so it makes the shows so much fun. Every night is a party!

SKRATCH: What's your favorite city to play? Is it your hometown?

RYAN: Eh, honestly, I love any city that has a few kids who know us. Of course we love

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## LET GO

By Chip Midnight

There is no denying Jamie Woolford's desire and ability to write sweet power-pop songs. Pick up anything by his former bands Animal Chin or The Stereo for evidence. So when bassist Chris Serafini, Woolford's former The Stereo

features drummer Scott Hessel (ex-Gloritone) signed a record deal with Militia, performed at the CMJ Music Marathon in New York City, and released their self-titled debut.

I had the opportunity to call Woolford at his Tempe, AZ, house and catch up with



bandmate, called the singer/guitarist in December 2004 and said, Here's the deal: we're starting a band, and you're in it. Woolford was quick to oblige. Less than a year after their very first band practice, Let Go (which also

him before the band headed out on a fall tour.

SKRATCH: Having already played with Chris in The Stereo, what was it like when the three of you got together for the first time?

JAMIE: It seemed very easy right away. Scott is just a super good drummer. I'm the weakest link in the band. It was extremely easy for those guys to walk in and play the material that I had

written. Everything just got absorbed. It was like putting a quarter in a jukebox and pushing play.

SKRATCH: The first song on the CD, *Illuminati*, starts off very quietly before exploding about 30 seconds in. Were you worried that on first listen people would



WIZARD OF OZ scene where the movie goes from black-and-white to color.

JAMIE: That's a really good analogy.

SKRATCH: In your bio, it says that two songs, *No Drugs*, *No Alcohol* and *120 B.P.M.*, tell the same story from four different

points of view. I was a little confused when listening to the songs. Can you explain the story or theme?

JAMIE: How do I explain this? It is confusing. That particular section of lyrics are observational things that are happening. The overall theme is (this may sound like some sort of Mr. T Afterschool Special type of thing) that everybody has something to say, everybody has a point of view and just because you might be saying it louder than me, that doesn't mean that it's

# LET GO

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right.

SKRATCH: When I first heard about the band, I misread your band name as Let's Go. That name has a rallying-cry connotation to it. But the reality is that your band name represents kind of the opposite, like you are telling people to let go of

extra things you recorded when you're playing live. We're like a full band that is just adding in a little bit of stuff. There's so much more we can do sonically. I think we've gotten it down good enough where people don't know it's happening. A lot of people think it's a guitar pedal I have. There are

JAMIE: For me, the best shows have been the ones where there are eight kids there and there is no stage or we're in a basement: something where the division between the band and our fans is not really there, has been removed or lessened to a point where it's not an issue. At the same

these people are about my music. I can certainly remember moments in my life where there was a song by The Descendents that I was like, Oh my God, this song was written for me. To be able to turn around and write something and have somebody have a similar experience with it has got to



something and move on.

JAMIE: It's kind of open to interpretation. We liked the sound of it, it was easy to remember, and it was easy to spell. There's a little confusion. At first you're thinking it's Let's Go, but there's a twist in there. It's only two words. To accomplish all of that in two words is no small feat.

SKRATCH: Is it true that the fourth member of Let Go is an iPod?

JAMIE: With an iPod, it's very easy to work out all the

moments in the show where a keyboard part comes in and at the very same time I'll hit a guitar pedal to change my guitar sound. People mistake that for some magical keyboard box. I'll step on it and people will be like, Whatever that pedal is, I've got to get myself one.

SKRATCH: Everybody in the band is very fan-friendly, especially with your interaction on a Website like MySpace. Do you ever feel like maybe you are too accessible to your fans?

**"...YOU MIGHT BE SAYING IT LOUDER THAN ME, THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT IT'S RIGHT."**

time, there is part of me that likes to guard myself. I don't really want people to know too much about me. But I like to share my music with people. If people are digging my music and buying records, I would like to say hi to them and strike up a relationship with those people who find something that I'm sharing to be worthy of their \$10. People will write to me and there is always a story about how a song I wrote affected them. It almost brings me to tears how passionate some of

be the most rewarding thing in your life, because I know exactly what it's like when they are describing it to me.

Woolford commented that being a musician pays the bills and so therefore Let Go will be out touring as much as possible this winter, crossing the country as many times as it takes to build up a steady fan base. For Let Go tour information, check out the band's Website at [www.letgorock.com](http://www.letgorock.com).

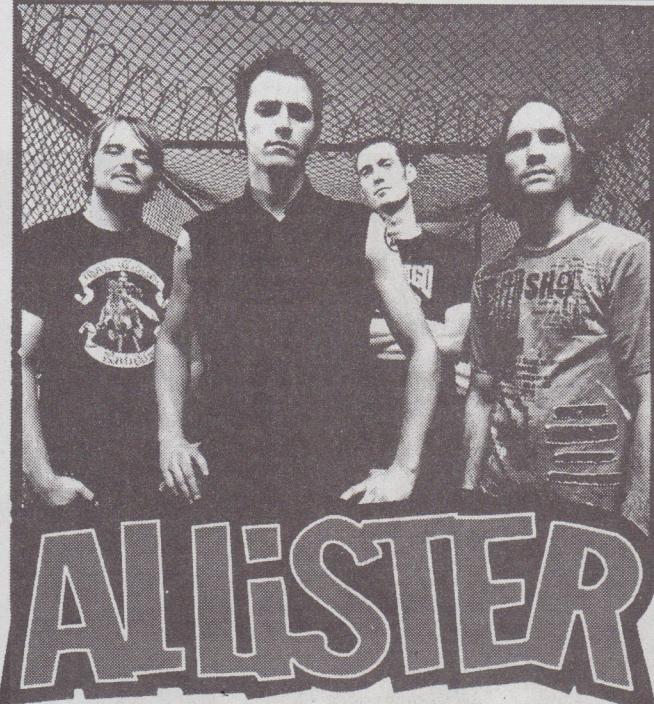
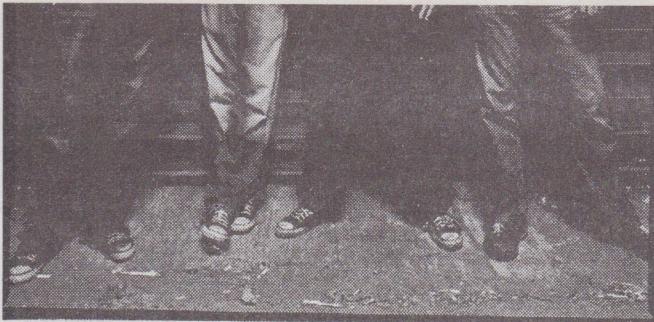
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**"It vaguely refers to the feeling you get when you're about to black out from a long night of drinking."**

Allister  
By Audiophile

Tim Rogner is the charming front-man of Drive-Thru Records band Allister. What would he be doing if he wasn't leading the band through releasing their latest album, BEFORE THE BLACK-OUT? Well, considering his (and the rest of the band's) commitment to the DIY scene, I could see them being astronauts. What? You don't see the connection? Whatever. Perhaps they were dreaming of the stars during their three-year hiatus from album-making. That's right, BEFORE THE BLACKOUT is the band's first release in three years. Why so long? Why, to make it come out right of course (I think)! These melodic punks from Chicago worked hard to get to where they are today (just like all Drive-Thru Records bands).

**SKRATCH: BEFORE THE BLACKOUT is your third release, correct?**

TIM: Technically, it's our fourth release: it's our third full-length record, but we released a 7" in 1997 called YOU CAN'T DO THAT ON VINYL.

**SKRATCH: How do you think your latest compares to your other albums?**

TIM: I think it's a lot better. It's more diverse and a little more mature.

**SKRATCH: Did you do anything differently in the songwriting and recording process, or was it the same as always?**

TIM: It was a little different. We had two new members join the band during the beginning of the songwriting process for this record, so it took a little time to figure out the best way to write with this group. We consciously tried to incorporate a bit more straight-up rock 'n' roll in this record.

**SKRATCH: This next question can get you into trouble: If you had to do without one member of your band, which member would it be, and why? (And do you think they'll now kick your ass for answering this question?)**

TIM: Kyle; and no: he'd probably kick your ass for making me answer such a dumb question.

**SKRATCH: To which blackout is your album title referring? Would it perchance be the rolling blackouts we had over here in California?**

TIM: It vaguely refers to the feeling you get when you're about to black out from a long night of drinking.

**SKRATCH: Which song off your new album would you recommend to someone hearing you guys for the first time, and why? What makes it so special?**

TIM: Probably "Blackout", because it's a song that I feel can cross genres and be enjoyed by people from all walks of life.

**SKRATCH: Here's another question that'll get you into trouble (just make sure the OTHER members of Allister don't read it): If you could get rid of any of your bandmates' girlfriends, which one would it be, and why?**

TIM: Our bass player is dating a girl with three nipples and a tail. She kinda creeps me out a little bit. Maybe I'd get rid of her.

**SKRATCH: Do you enjoy touring more or working in the studio, or are they just too different to compare in that way?**

TIM: They are definitely different, and both are fun in their own way—but I think I would choose touring any day of the week.

**SKRATCH: What do you think of Drive-Thru Records?**

TIM: It's FANTASTIC!

**SKRATCH: What would be your musical dream team? What musicians would you put together to make the ultimate band for you to tour with after the release of your album?**

TIM: Butch Walker, Billie Joe Armstrong, John Bonham, and Flea.

**SKRATCH: Butter or margarine? Why?**

TIM: Butter: maybe it'll get me fat.

**SKRATCH: Which looks better on a girl, bright lipstick or a more subtle color?**

TIM: Subtleness.

**SKRATCH: What are your favorite new bands this year? Have any of them influenced you during the making of your album?**

TIM: Hmm. Good question. I don't really listen to very much new music or very many current bands...but if I had to pick one, I'd say...The Summer Obsession. Their record comes out early next year.

**SKRATCH: Have you ever read SKRATCH MAGAZINE before? (Be honest.)**

TIM: I've seen it around a few times.

**SKRATCH: What's the difference between melodic punk and pop-punk? IS there a difference?**

TIM: There's no difference at all. If it's catchy, it's catchy.

Thanks for the interview, Tim—it was a good one. It will be even better, though, when you become an astronaut. Eat Wheaties, man, Wheaties. Be sure to check out Tim's band Allister before they go to the moon at [www.allisterrock.com](http://www.allisterrock.com).

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From Phoenix Arizona

American Eyes  
By Audiophile

American Eyes is one of those bands that takes two seemingly different genres of music (along with many other outside influences) and tries to fuse them into one awesome sound. What two sounds do they try to fuse? Dance music and punk music. Now, don't be discouraged. Just because these punk boys like to incorporate dance beats doesn't mean that they're pussies. I think their being banned from multiple L.A. clubs speaks to the contrary.

Below, David explains (among other things) how one of their more recent bannings happened.

**SKRATCH:** First and foremost, why can't trust anything that bleeds?

**DAVID:** Um, it's basically an example of [how] you got to go with your own gut. It's like, everyone is shady and stuff in some way, and I've never met a completely honest person. [...] There's always something shady.

**SKRATCH:** What made you decide to be a vocalist? Why not play guitar or bass or drums or...?

**DAVID:** Actually, I was the original drummer.

**SKRATCH:** Oh, so you just switched over to vocals for this band?

**DAVID:** Yeah. We were all in a band before American Eyes, and I played the drums. Our singer just left the band, so I guess by default I got promoted.

**SKRATCH:** You guys incorporate dance beats into your music, correct?

**DAVID:** Of course.

**SKRATCH:** What influenced you into doing that?

**DAVID:** We're all big fans of dance music.

**SKRATCH:** You guys hail from L.A.. What's your favorite club to hang out at when you have nothing better to do?

**DAVID:** The Key Club—the Plush Room inside the Key Club ([which is] like, under the Key Club). We're probably there almost every night that we're at home.

**SKRATCH:** Do you have a favorite place to eat in L.A.?

**DAVID:** California Chicken Café, by far. No no no—actually, Vegan Express.

**SKRATCH:** Are you vegans, or do you just like the food there?

**DAVID:** I'm a vegetarian.

**SKRATCH:** Why would you eat at a chicken place if you're a vegetarian?

**DAVID:** They have great salads.

**SKRATCH:** Oh, okay. What are your plans for Thanksgiving?

**DAVID:** I don't even know.

**SKRATCH:** Well, I guess you won't be eating turkey.

**DAVID:** No, I guess I'll be eating pasta.

**SKRATCH:** With or without the cranberry sauce?

**DAVID:** Without. It's overrated. You can put out there that David thinks that cranberries are overrated.

**SKRATCH:** You're quoted as saying that "bands are a dime a dozen out here." Do you think that you've put enough work in to get noticed and get ahead of the dime-a-dozen crowd?

**DAVID:** I hope so. I feel like we worked really hard. But there are a lot of other great bands in L.A., as well.

**SKRATCH:** Do you think you're worth more than a dime a dozen now?

**DAVID:** Yes, I would probably say...I don't know. I

would probably say [we're worth] a \$1.09, 'cause John works with us.

**SKRATCH:** Poor John. So, if I cut myself and started bleeding, would you not trust me anymore during this interview?

**DAVID:** I'd probably start sucking it.

**SKRATCH:** Oh.

**DAVID:** I'd probably check if you had AIDS first.

**SKRATCH:** I don't have AIDS. I'm a blood donor—I think they would tell me.

**DAVID:** But if you did have AIDS, all I'd have to do is find someone else who has AIDS to cancel it out, you know? Positive and negative cancel each other out.

**SKRATCH:** Did you know that [www.smarpunk.com](http://www.smarpunk.com) has your song "The Girl with the Broken Heart (By the Way)" listed as "The Girl with the Broken Heard (By the Way)"?

**DAVID:** Really?

# AMERICAN EYES



**SKRATCH:** Yeah. Kind of changes the meaning, don't you think?

**DAVID:** No, it's kind of a remix. You didn't know?

**SKRATCH:** No, I didn't. That was the remix?

**DAVID:** That was the Smartpunk remix they decided to put up there without telling us.

**SKRATCH:** [Laughs] Oh, I see. That explains everything.

**DAVID:** Yeah, I guess we're going to have to get down there and fight Ryan from Smartpunk. "Girl with the Broken Heard". That's amazing. We're going to ask what a broken heard is, anyway. Maybe we're starting our own language here.

**SKRATCH:** Who's the girl with the broken heart that you guys are singing about?

**DAVID:** It's like, let's say you meet a beautiful girl. This girl can be PERFECT, but then she just tries way too hard. I mean, you don't NEED to try way too hard, because naturally you're fine. It's always like there are



## "IT WOULD BE LIKE A WARM, FLUFFY BLANKET"

people who are trying too hard by either covering themselves up with makeup or...you know. But we fell in love with those people. They're trying to be like something...you know, like something you see in a magazine, when they don't realize that they're just being like everyone else and that the originality they have is not coming through.

**SKRATCH:** If you were one of those people, would your song make you feel better about yourself?

**DAVID:** I hope so. It would be like a warm, fluffy blanket.

**SKRATCH:** Aw, that's nice.

**DAVID:** Yeah. On a very cold day, in Alaska.

**SKRATCH:** In your bio, there was something about you guys trashing clubs and getting banned for a while.

**DAVID:** Yeah. It's still happening. We just got banned from the Knitting Factory.

**SKRATCH:** Why? What did you do?

**DAVID:** I don't know, to be honest with you. That was a fun one. I just got off stage and security was waiting for me. They put my arms behind my back like they were arresting me and threw all my stuff, and they were like, "You're never allowed back here." They said I was, um, [To someone else:] What were they saying I got kicked out for? [Mumbling in the background] Yeah, they said I was endangering the crowd, 'cause I was climbing the pillars—you know, up on top. I was hanging there, and they were worried I was going to fall on them. They were like, "You could have broken things and hurt people, and we could have gotten a lawsuit." I guess they wanted us to sit down and play acoustic guitars.

**SKRATCH:** See, climbing stuff—that's fun.

**DAVID:** We got in trouble there. We got in trouble in a lot of clubs just for doing things like that.

I don't know. Maybe we should give everyone helmets, football gear...

**SKRATCH:** Then you can say you're protecting them, not endangering them. You should hand out condoms, too.

**DAVID:** Totally. Just find the cute ones, and...

**SKRATCH:** Oh, you're not going to be...God, what is that band? The one that had their roadies go out and find cute girls and give them backstage passes.

**DAVID:** I can't wait until we're that big. Wait, didn't that band's guitar player die from AIDS?

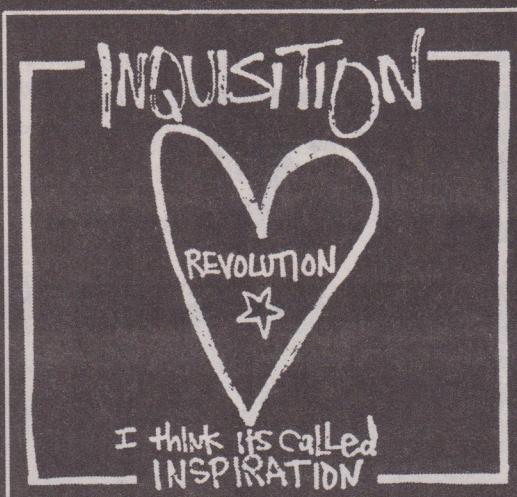
**SKRATCH:** More than likely. So be sure you have those condoms.

**DAVID:** You know what's funny? I was reading this interview with Gerard from My Chemical Romance, and he was like, "Yeah, this band forced the girl at this show to show her boobs, and I was so offended." I was like, "What's wrong with you? I would be stoked. I'm like, What are you? I think he's racist against boobies."

**SKRATCH:** [Laughs] Oh, wait until he reads this interview. (I'm sure he reads our magazine.)

**DAVID:** Yeah, he's racist against boobies.

Be sure to check American Eyes out at [www.americaneyesmusic.com](http://www.americaneyesmusic.com).



## INQUISITION

"Revolution... I think it's called Inspiration"  
(featuring members of Strike Anywhere, Ann Beretta, and River City High)

A band like Inquisition made a dent in the underground punk community in their heyday, when they should have been a full blown car crash. —Tim Barry (AVAIL)

Very few things will leave as lasting an impression on me as the first chord of the first song I heard by them.  
—Jason Black (HOT WATER MUSIC)

Inquisition had it all, the energy, the desperation, political lyrics, it was all there and it got me so psyched. —Tim (ENSIGN)

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DOOM-  
RIDERS  
By Janelle Jones

They say all that's assured in life is death and taxes. We've got one more to add to that heartening adage: SKRATCH's perpetual ability to ruin a good time and annoy the fuck out of you. Just ask Nate Newton of Doomriders and Converge fame, whom we bombarded whilst he was playing poker at Foxwoods. But we had good reason: Doomriders RULE, and their debut, **BLACK THUNDER** (Deathwish), totally SLAYS.

SKRATCH: I REALLY like the record. I've been recommending it to my friends, just saying, "They're Doomriders, and the record's **BLACK THUNDER**." [Laughs] And the way I say it [i.e., ominously] and how I describe the artwork, they're like, "I TOTALLY have to hear this."

NATE: That's awesome! The idea we were going for [was that] we wanted people, before they even heard us, to see the name of the band and the cover and either be like, "I fuckin' HATE this band" or "This is amazing." We wanted people to say, "Who the FUCK do these guys think they are?" [Laughs]

NATE: Barbecue is a rockin' good time with a barbecue: loud music, a hot grill, burgers, dogs, good times with your friends, acting like an idiot....

SKRATCH: When did you guys initially get together?

NATE: It's been a long time in the making. Chris and I, we've been friends for a while (before I was in Converge) and had similar tastes in music and always talked about how we needed to play together. Then when I moved to Massachusetts six years ago, we started jamming together, just playing guitar. It took us a few years to just find the time in our lives to get together on a regular basis, and also it took a while to find a drummer and bass player who were down with what we wanted to do. Once we finally did, we practiced and wrote a lot of songs. I was really busy with Converge at the time, so we didn't play any shows until we were together for close to two years. People keep asking me if we just got together and wrote all these songs right off the bat. No, we didn't. We were together for a while writing songs, so when we did finally start playing shows, we were ready to record an album. (That's the one serious answer you're gonna get today.)

SKRATCH: Did you guys have a lot of songs to choose from?

## "...BUT THERE'S MORE TO IT THAN THAT, APPARENTLY. I'M STILL WORKING ON IT."

SKRATCH: You can tell you're having fun with it.

NATE: We're having a great time.

SKRATCH: I saw your MySpace page. Pretty funny [read the bio if you wanna see what's what, losers], but this is great. Recently we got these new guidelines, and there's something about not asking any "stupid" or "silly" questions. I think that makes a fun interview.

NATE: If you're not gonna ask us stupid questions, then there's not really much to us. [Laughs]

SKRATCH: Then forget about it! But what's "barbecue"?

NATE: We did, in the sense that we'd written a whole lotta songs; but we scrapped a lot of them along the way. I think really fast when it comes to writing music, and right off the bat, if any one of us doesn't like something, it's gone. So, each time we wrote a song, we'd write a better song after that and be like, "That last song doesn't even compare to this one, so it's not gonna make the cut." That's kinda how the writing process went. We kept going till we felt as strongly about every song we had.

SKRATCH: Did you want to have 13 songs to add to the [feel]?

NATE: Oh, the ominous number 13? No, it just worked out that way. We got lucky-lucky 13.

SKRATCH: But there's a lot going on. Every song has something different. Some are just a major departure from the manic hardcore. All the sudden you get, for example, a "Midnight Eye".

NATE: I think what it is is that, as far as hardcore goes, we're a little older than your normal hardcore kid in a band and generally we're just fans of all kinds of music. I'm not necessarily into a band being completely eclectic with everything they do musically; at the same time, I want my influences to show through. We just wanted the music that we enjoy to shine through in what we were doing. Sometimes you can't put a classic-rock riff in a song with a hardcore riff. You gotta write different songs that sound a little different.

SKRATCH: What's your overall view of the album? I guess you're really happy with it.

NATE: Yeah, I think it's good. I think it's a record you can put on and listen to beginning to end. I'm not a dude who puts on my own band's record and rocks out all day. It's a good driving record. It's a fun record. That's all I ever set out to do with this band: just write fun music that I enjoy and that my friends can come to the show and act like assholes at. I've read some reviews where people try to really intellectualize it, make it into something it's not or just trash it because it's not intellectual enough. To me, that's dumb. It's music just for the sake of having fun. It seems like that's getting lost in underground music nowadays. Everybody's trying to be serious and artistic and intellectual with their music, which is fine; but what happened to just listening to good music for the sake of [it]?

SKRATCH: The shows must be cool.

NATE: They are. We get a lot of hecklers (which I enjoy).

SKRATCH: What do they say?!

NATE: Look, I'm not the smartest guy in the world and I say some pretty dumb things between songs, so it's pretty easy to just chime in and zing me. So if you can do it, more power to you. We almost invite it. I like when there's dialogue going on between the audience and the band in any band I go see. Well, maybe not with Neurosis, but... [Laughs]

SKRATCH: How's being a frontman?

NATE: It's different, that's for sure. In Converge, it's easy for me to step out of the limelight and do my thing; but in Doomriders, I've learned how

difficult it is to keep the momentum going between songs. Now I have a lot more respect for people who front bands. You think that all you gotta do is play your dumb songs and everyone'll be into it, but there's more to it than that, apparently. I'm still working on it. [Laughs]

SKRATCH: Do you guys play the slower songs live?

NATE: We've never played the instrumental song live. I would like to, but that is a song that I don't really think would work unless we were headlining and playing for an hour, otherwise, that'd be a momentum-killer. One day we will. Aside from that song, we've played every song live. Some of [what we play] depends on how well my voice holds out, because I'm not the best crooner in the world, so if I scream too hard every night, I might not be able to do the more melodic song, "Midnight Eye". We've made out all right with it so far.

SKRATCH: One of my favorites is actually "Listen Up!". You said some reviewers were over-intellectualizing. Do they say anything about that song?

NATE: I don't really care what reviewers have to say. Every now and then, someone'll send me a link and I'll read it for shits and giggles, but there was one in particular [that is] the only one I've seen where anyone mentioned that song.

SKRATCH: I mentioned it. I definitely wrote a review online.

NATE: This one basically said, "This song rules because the only words are 'Get off my fuckin' back.'" [Laughs]

SKRATCH: That's what I wrote.

NATE: Awesome. Well, thank you for believing in me.

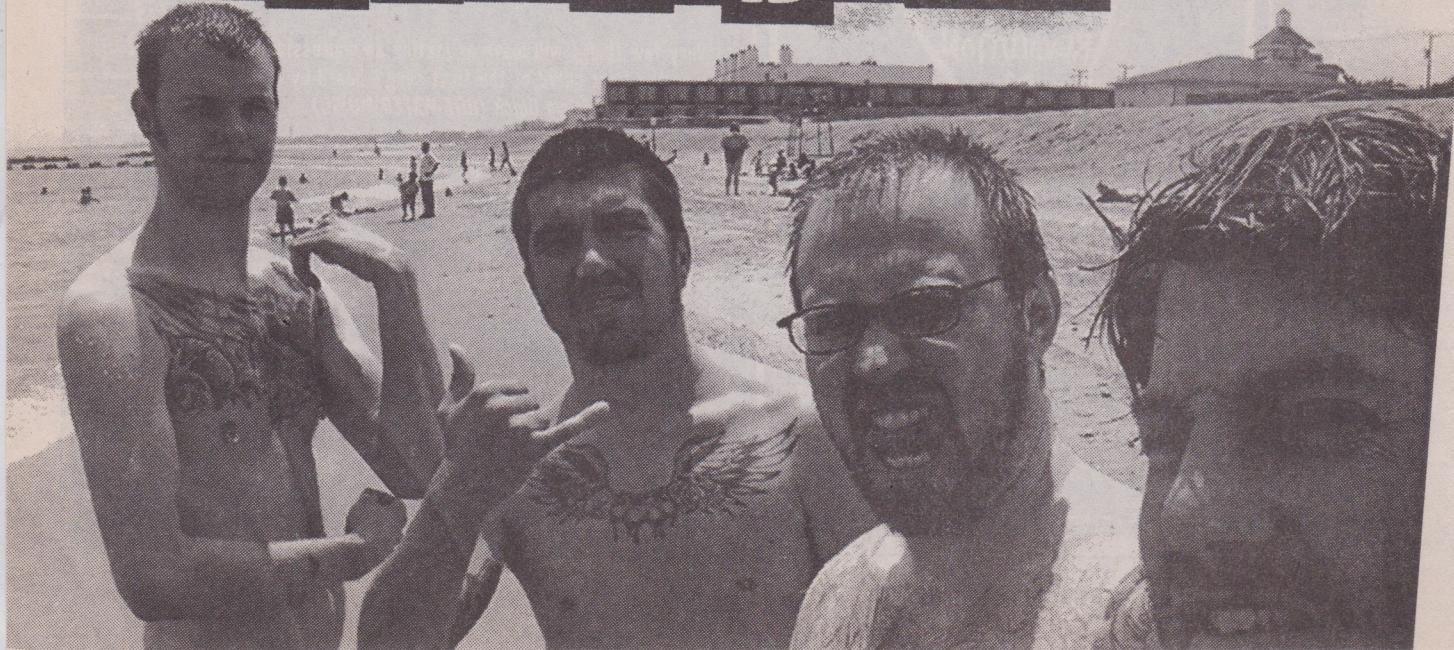
SKRATCH: I like stuff that's serious, but also very much the fun stuff. As you said, many bands take themselves TOO seriously.

NATE: When you do that, you almost become a cartoon version of yourself. It's too easy to make fun of you. And I'm an asshole, so I will make fun of you. [Laughs]

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## THE REAL MCKENZIES

By Marcia Taylor

The Real McKenzies are a clan of whiskey-swilling Canadian Scots (or maybe Scots Canadians) who just released their third album of infectious, bagpipe-driven punk rock, 10,000 SHOTS. Okay, it's actually more guitar-driven than bagpipe-driven, but the band IS unique in having a mohawk-sporting bagpiper in the line-up. The group covers traditional Scots tunes, as well as writing its own material—much of which is about drinking and having a damn good time, which is part of what inspired the group to form. It's all about the "ceilidh" (pronounced "kee-lee"), which frontman Paul McKenzie describes as "a wicked party that carries on for days." McKenzie also says that he formed the band to get revenge on his parents and grandparents for dressing him up in a kilt and making him sing and dance to traditional Scottish music from a tender age. The band (McKenzie on vocals, includes Matthew McNasty on bagpipes, Dirty Kurt and Bone on guitars, Little Joe on bass, and Sean on war drums) has been bringing good times to audiences since 1994. The Real McKenzies are currently touring Europe, and McKenzie took the time to answer some written questions about the band and its music.

**SKRATCH:** Just to kick this interview off on a light note, isn't being Scottish and Canadian a double indemnity: cheap AND boring? Or are Scottish frugality and Canadian dullness simply myths?

**MCKENZIE:** Well, I believe that those options in life should be left up to the individual. I don't know anybody like that, and I hope I never do. The media seems to like drumming up stereotypes. I own a quadraphonic system myself.

**SKRATCH:** What do your parents think of The Real McKenzies' music? Do they appreciate the fact that you are turning a whole different generation on to music its members otherwise might not ever even hear?

**MCKENZIE:** My parents are enthralled with what trouble and controversy their little Paulie has stirred up. Rebel history is endless and very punk rock. I consider myself very fortunate to have such great support from my friends and family.

**SKRATCH:** What aspects of Scottish music and culture appeal to you so much that you chose to create a SCOTTISH punk band, rather than just a PUNK band?

**MCKENZIE:** I had been in many punk bands prior to The Real McKenzies. I suppose all I can say is that, in my opinion, SCOTSPUNK is the best EVER.

**SKRATCH:** How do you feel about being on the Fat Wreck label, and what was working with Fat Mike like?

**MCKENZIE:** From where I sit, Fat Wreck is the best label for us. The company is like a family. Everyone does their best. This is one of the reasons that it really works for us. I have been acquainted with Fat Mike for a number of years, but this last CD gave me the opportunity to really get to know him. We got to drink and party and write songs and lyrics. He is quite a talented man. Funny, too. This is important. To sum it all up, we are very happy with our excellent arrangement, and we are all looking forward to lots of hard work, recording and touring, etc.—like tigers.

**SKRATCH:** Please tell me about the subject matter/historical background of "Will Ye No Come Back Again?" on the new disc.

**MCKENZIE:** "Will Ye No..." was written by Lady MacNairn. She was beckoning Prince Charlie to come back to Scotland to unite the clans to save Scotland from English treachery at a time when England was ethnically cleansing the highlands

with heartless violence. Had the Scots won the Battle of Culloden, there would have been a different world. (This is true with most battles, though.)

**SKRATCH:** Do you have a favorite song on the new disc—or more than one? If yes, why do you like the particular song(s)? Fun to play, audience loves it, makes you laugh, exorcised personal demons (just kidding on that one), dedicated to someone you care about...?

**MCKENZIE:** NO FAIR! I am in love with music—most music, anyways—so it's not fair to ask. I am the same with literature. Why don't you ask me about my favorite book? I don't think I have very many demons, but in terms of lyrical content, I must confess that there are a few that try to express how we feel and convey a sense of camaraderie with the people who have helped to make our livers what they have become.

**SKRATCH:** What are some of your favorite places to play when you are on the road, and why?

**MCKENZIE:** Here comes another single question that could inspire a series of novels. (Who knows? Perhaps someday when I don't have the itch for a punk-rock life (yeah, right—don't hold your breath), I may even endeavor to do such a project.) I am a punk rock tour dog. I look at the best part of everywhere we play. I have to admit, though, that we like the world.

**SKRATCH:** What are some of your favorite bands to play with, and why?

**MCKENZIE:** We are currently on tour with a band from Boston. They are good boys, and we have become fast friends. Far from Finished is the name of the group. To be quite honest, because of the nature of recording and touring, most of the bands we work with have very similar goals, etc. This makes for congenial relations. We get along with most people. We have to—it's our job.

**SKRATCH:** Why do you include covers of traditional songs on your discs? What do you think it is about traditional tunes that appeals to people throughout the ages?

**MCKENZIE:** Rebel music—this is the key to connecting old tunes with new. As long as there are rebels in the world, there will be rebel music. HOORAY!

**SKRATCH:** Do you have any funny/crazy/wild stories from the road of late that you'd like to share?

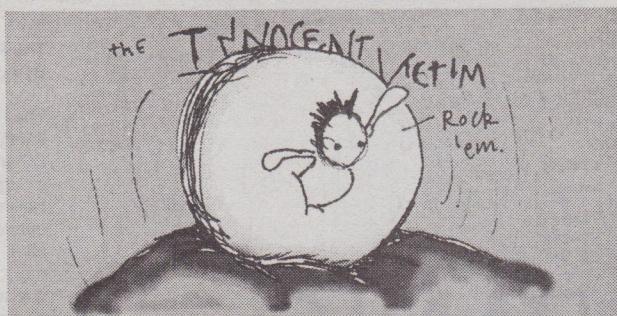
**MCKENZIE:** I kicked our only soccer ball into a ravine that had nettles and thistles and old, rusty barbed wire all over the place. Well, after about half an hour of drunken ball-locating, I kicked it back to the bus, only to find my Jonny Thomas and the lads were hacked to bits (to say nothing of my own legs). Kilted life can be quite a test—but if you are up to it, it's the best and only way. So, after they stitched me up and sewed me cock and balls back on, it was life as usual: PUNK, PUNK, PUNK.

**SKRATCH:** What's next on the agenda for The Real McKenzies? Do you plan to record another record soon, or are you focused on touring for the newest one?

**MCKENZIE:** What with touring with these boys, we have a lounge where we play music as we travel. We have a double-CD ready to go. This band is so fucking cool. It is a pleasure to be on the road with my peers. The world can expect some moving, dynamic music from us in the near future. We are glee-ful to get to do what we were put here for, so we shall continue and carry on.

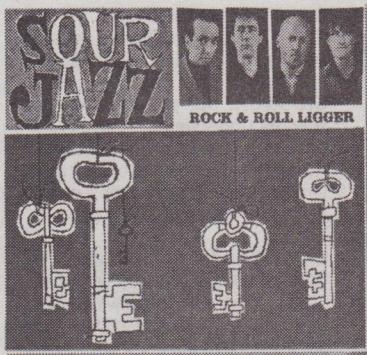
You can learn more about the band at [www.realmckenzies.com](http://www.realmckenzies.com) or [www.fatwreck.com](http://www.fatwreck.com).





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# NEW RELEASES



# THE PANIC DIVISION



The Panic Division  
By Audiophile

The Panic Division aren't just a good band, they're a great band. They know that, I know that—I just thought you should know that, too. Hailing from Texas, this electro-pop quartet hammers out bitchen tune after bitchen tune for your enjoyment. Their latest CD, *VERSUS*, is due to hit the streets November 1st, so be sure to look out for that and pick up a copy for yourself. It will be released by the Militia Group.

Singer Colton Holliday is not only a talented singer/guitar player, but a great interviewee, as well. He was quite a joy to talk to. Next time The Panic Division plays near you, hang out after the show and see if you might be able to talk to him yourself. (Or, you can just read my interview with him below.)

**SKRATCH: When you were a kid, did you want to be a cowboy?**

COLTON: [Laughs] No, not at all. None of the rumors are really true about Texas. I think that a lot of people think it's cowboys and horses and deserts and stuff, but it's really not.

**SKRATCH: So you never had a 10-gallon hat?**

COLTON: Well, I probably had a cowboy hat at one point when I was a kid, I don't know. But I've never been into that stuff, so....

**SKRATCH: Do you think there is a big difference between mainstream pop singers like Britney Spears and pop/rock bands like Third Eye Blind and Matchbox Twenty, or do you think it's all kind of the same thing?**

COLTON: As far as the music-writing process, I think it's the same thing—it's just a different kind of music. As far as production, it's exactly the same thing. [...] Some people would think that [pop/rock] is deeper and it has more meaning than stuff like Britney Spears, you know?

**SKRATCH: I hear the members of your band have varied tastes in music. How does that affect you guys when it comes to studio work?**

COLTON: Oh, it's totally cool. [...] Part of what we're trying to do with music is have all kinds of different genres in it. Some people are strictly electronic. Like Daniel, our guitarist: he's into more electronic stuff, like dark electronic hip-hop stuff; but he's also into rock and everything. I'm into the same kind of stuff. I grew up for years doing electronic stuff with my friend Diego (who was in the band at one point). We learned a lot of stuff about doing loops and using stuff like FruityLoops to make a lot of stuff to incorporate with our rock. It's definitely good that we're into all this different stuff.

**SKRATCH: Have you guys used anything besides FruityLoops like Reason or any of the better software?**

COLTON: Yeah, we've used Reason; and we've got Ableton Live. We tended to use FruityLoops, 'cause it was just easier. Now we've got Carry in our band, he's taken over the electronics. He actually only uses Reason or Ableton Live.

**SKRATCH: Do you think there are certain advantages to being on an indie label versus being on a major label?**

COLTON: Definitely, yeah. I'm totally glad we're on an indie: it gives us a chance to sort of start out the right way. Militia is really good for us and really on top of stuff. They already have a great buzz. A lot of kids already have a high regard for the label, so they're already expecting good stuff to come out of it. It's definitely better for us. [It's] a safer bet to be able to start like that.

**SKRATCH: Tell our readers something shocking about your new album (which is due out soon).**

COLTON: Something shocking? Hmmm. What's shocking is that we're trying to do something different. We're trying to get away from the clichés—even though we might fit into some.

**SKRATCH: Let's get down to some business: boxers or briefs?**

COLTON: Boxer-briefs.

**SKRATCH: Boxer-briefs!**

COLTON: [Laughs] Daniel, what do you wear? [...] Daniel wears boxers.

**SKRATCH: So, you couldn't borrow his underwear.**

COLTON: I could if I needed to. [Laughs] I used to wear boxers all the time, but they kept giving me a wedge. I hate that, man. I like the support.

**SKRATCH: You like support.**

COLTON: I like it to stay where it is. 'Cause my pants are always falling down, and I'm always pulling them up. If you have boxers, then you end up pulling the boxers up.

**SKRATCH: Maybe you should wear pants that fit.**

COLTON: I try.

**SKRATCH: Halloween is coming up soon. Do you have any special plans?**

COLTON: Actually, yeah. Being that we're releasing our album on November 1st, we were talking about having a CD-release party—and what's kind of convenient is that at the club right next to it is an indie CD store. We'll probably be playing the show, and right after you could go next door and buy the new album.

**SKRATCH: What are you going to dress up as?**

COLTON: I don't know. We haven't talked about it much. But I know we're going to do something.

"I USED TO WEAR BOXERS ALL THE TIME, BUT THEY KEPT GIVING ME A WEDGIE."

SKRATCH: If you weren't doing music, what would you be doing?  
COLTON: If I wasn't doing music, I'd be doing animation. I went to school for it.

SKRATCH: Did you ever go to your high-school dances?  
COLTON: Not really. That wasn't really my thing. I went this one time with this chick I really wanted, but, uh, I don't think I was quite good enough for her at the time. But yeah, I think I went to Homecoming one time. That's about it.

SKRATCH: Think you're good enough for her now?  
COLTON: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

SKRATCH: You should call her.  
COLTON: I'm tied down now—I'd get in trouble.

SKRATCH: If you could dress the other members of your band up, what would you dress them up as?  
COLTON: Hmm.

SKRATCH: They don't have to read this, so don't worry.  
COLTON: [Laughs] Hmmm. I don't know. I think we already pretty much dress each other up as it is. We always argue about that, anyway.

SKRATCH: You guys argue about what you're going to wear on stage?  
COLTON: [It doesn't get] to that point, but sometimes. We give each other a hard time about stuff.

SKRATCH: Like your boxer-briefs?  
COLTON: Oh yeah. We like to give James a hard time. He's the one we pick on.

SKRATCH: Aw. Why do you pick on James so much?  
COLTON: 'Cause it's funny. He's short and funny, he talks funny—we make fun of him.

SKRATCH: Have you ever made James cry?  
COLTON: No. He got into it, though. He got into it bad one time. We actually had a fight. Oh, man. We were driving to New York, and somehow we got lost in Washington D.C. 'cause we thought it would be a shortcut. We wake up and see the Washington Monument, and Daniel was like, "Hey, James, what is that?" And James is like, "It's the 9/11," and we were giving him a hard time about that. He claims he was just joking, but we don't know about James.

SKRATCH: Oh, that's funny. Can I print that?  
COLTON: [Laughs] I don't know, probably. Yeah, you can print it.

SKRATCH: He might kick your ass.  
COLTON: Yeah, he probably will.

Be sure to check out The Panic Division on-line at [www.thepanicdivision.com](http://www.thepanicdivision.com).

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## THREE BAD JACKS

By Marcia Taylor

I'm not sure who wrote the press release for Three Bad Jacks' newest release, *CRAZY IN THE HEAD*, but its unnamed author says of the record: "[...] The end result is 13 songs that make up what I would honestly consider to be in the top 20 greatest rock and roll records of all time." That's a pretty big claim to make, when you think back over all that's gone before. But the disc does feature an immaculately-crafted set of songs; and ego and attitude have always had their place in rock 'n' roll (just think about Jerry Lee Lewis and Phil Spector). Following in that tradition of professional immaturity is Elvis Suissa, frontman, lyricist, and guitarist for Three Bad Jacks, whose dedication to craftsmanship, music, and showmanship is also reminiscent of Lewis's and Spector's best work.

Suissa spoke to me from the band's current tour. (Three Bad Jacks includes Bret Williams on stand-up bass and Josh Hobbs on drums (although Suissa plays with different drummers).)

### SKRATCH: Where are you right now, and how much longer do you have on your tour?

SUICSA: We're on the way to Augusta. We've already been gone for two weeks, and we have another week out. We've played in Denver, Kansas City, Chicago, Detroit, New Jersey, New York, Boston, Richmond, Charlotte, and Atlanta.

### SKRATCH: How have the shows been going? Have you had any that really stood out?

SUICSA: Usually they're all pretty good. We have a pretty solid fan base nationally. Every night is crazy. We throw a really intense show, and people-greasers, punks, and indie kids all together-go nuts every night, dancing onstage.

### SKRATCH: So you're a rockabilly band?

SUICSA: No, we're a little bit more than that: we blend elements of rockabilly, psychobilly, punk, and vintage rock 'n' roll.

### SKRATCH: Who are some of the other musicians who have influenced the band's sound?

SUICSA: Well, it's a very broad sound, everything from Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Motorhead, The Clash, stuff like Social Distortion, Marty Robbins.... It almost encompasses everything, but with an upright bass. Our first record was more traditional.

### SKRATCH: How long did you work on the new record?

SUICSA: I was working on the new record about three years. I kept listening to it and didn't like it, and I would throw things away and start over. Everything is on the chopping block: nothing is sacred.

### SKRATCH: So are you happy with the record now that it's done?

SUICSA: The Chicago METRO-TIMES is calling it a classic. We typically hear, "I can't say this is the best record made, but it's pretty damn close." We're getting national radio airplay, too, which is pretty amazing. And we've been selling out theatres and venues for six years.

### SKRATCH: What are your plans for when you're done touring?

SUICSA: When we come back to town, we're shooting a full-blown music video with Robert John. He shot videos for Motorhead and Guns N' Roses. The live footage will be shot at the Knitting Factory [in Los Angeles] on October 27th and at Chain Reaction [in Anaheim] on October 28th. We do a really intense show, with a lot of pyrotechnics. We set the upright bass on fire. The whole stage is on fire. People usually get into a frenzy when they come to our shows. We played the Hootenanny at the same time as Social Distortion, and our stage was packed.

We can go to clubs anywhere for the first time and pack them. But we're still indie.

### SKRATCH: Is being indie better than being on a major label?

SUICSA: Well, we own all our publishing. If we sell a CD, we keep all the money. There are pluses and minuses. We can finance a full-blown recording studio because we sell so much product. But right now it is hard being on the road, with the cost of gas, food, and rooms. I'm about ready to hand over the product to a label, because I've proven everything I have to prove and I'd like someone else to take

over the reins. But we're not desperate; we're selling well and can afford to pick and choose—or to stay indie, for that matter.

### SKRATCH: So you're open to offers.

SUICSA: Well, if I got on a major or pretty big indie label, I'd be very cautious about who I'm dealing with. I produce all my stuff, anyway. They'd have to be better than what I do. I'm not walking in asking for ideas; I'm walking in with a finished product.

### SKRATCH: How long have you been playing in bands?

SUICSA: I was in my first band when I was about 10 or 11. I could play anything on the guitar. I could play the blues when I was just a baby—you know, Robert Johnson stuff. When I was 16 or 17, I was playing with the original members of the Rick James band. I've played rock, metal, and punk. I grabbed influences from Elvis Presley to Elvis Costello.

### SKRATCH: Wow, playing guitar that young! Did you grow up with parents who were musicians?

SUICSA: Sort of. My mom and dad came from France. My mom loves music; it's her life. The first thing they got me when we came to America was a little guitar. She took me to see bands from a very early age. I saw Alice Cooper when I was really young. I had an uncle who picked around, but he was really just an inspiration. I practiced 10 to 12 hours a day. That's all I wanted to do. By the time I was 15, I could play anything. I've never stopped.

**"We set the drums on fire, and a couple of them went up in flames."**

### SKRATCH: How long have you been playing with your current line-up?

SUICSA: Bret's been in the band for seven years. I've been using DJ Bonebrake from X. I love him. I grew up listening to X. He got a little busy, and I was using Tom Brayton from The Doors. He did a bunch of gigs with us. I've been blessed: I've always had the best drummers in town. We're using this kid named Adam now. We are almost the Spinal Tap of drummers. We set the drums on fire, and a couple of them went up in flames. [Laughs]

### SKRATCH: I assume that you write the lyrics and music for the band? If so, what inspires you?

SUICSA: It's pretty grass-roots, things from daily life. Running a band, you deal with so many assholes. You find someone you thought was a friend, and he turns out to be an asshole. "Scars" is about that, about when a friend sticks a knife in your back. I knew Joe Strummer; I played shows with him. You miss the people you used to know, the shows you used to see. There were great people who used to play at the Palomino, and it's now a banquet hall. That's what "Remember the Nights" is about. "Why, Tell Me Why" is about the government taking care of people. When we play in the South and the Midwest, I see people who are just scraping to get by. Big business is taking over the economy and ruining it.

### SKRATCH: Now that you're a professional musician and doing so well, your mom must be really psyched!

SUICSA: My parents are completely into it. When I was growing up, my mom was like, "Keep practicing," not "Go do your homework." My dad at one time did not get me being a musician; he was all about "Get a job at the post office." He used to tell me that once a week for 10 years.

### SKRATCH: Any last words?

SUICSA: If you're true to what you believe in, you'll do well. To play it safe is not good enough. It's quite obvious that we can play fast tunes, but most of our fans want to hear our ballads. If some big, scary greaser guy wants to hear a ballad, that's a testament. And we always change our set list, because I get bored doing the same thing. I appreciate you taking the time to do the interview. Thank you!

### SKRATCH: You're welcome, and good luck on the rest of the tour!

If you'd like to learn more about Three Bad Jacks, you can visit [www.threabadjacks.com](http://www.threabadjacks.com) or [www.myspace.com/threabadjacks](http://www.myspace.com/threabadjacks).



# Three Bad Jacks

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The Bloody Hollies  
By Jennifer Swann

The Bloody Hollies create a potent blend of heavy, blues-inspired garage rock that is pure, raw, passionate, and intoxicating. They gracefully resonate such a booming buzz that the average listener might suspect this band has emerged out of [fill in the hottest music scene of the moment]. However, lead-shouter and roaring guitarist Wesley Doyle (who is accompanied by Phillip Freedenberg on bass, Mathew Bennett on drums, and Joey Horgen on guitar) assures me that the band can adapt to any city and produce the energized riffs it does without the influence and validation of a particular scene or environment. The Bloody Hollies sure generate a lot of racket for a mere quartet. Soulful and unadulterated, they possess rock 'n' roll songs, a punk attitude, and a gloomy and mysterious outlook portrayed by intellectual songwriting.

I recently got to interrogate Wesley via e-mail.

**SKRATCH: Who are The Bloody Hollies?**

WESLEY: A four-piece rock 'n' roll outfit that started out in Buffalo, NY, and presently residing in San Diego.

**SKRATCH: How long have you guys been together?**

WESLEY: I started the band in the summer of '99. This lineup has been together since the new album came out, though.

**SKRATCH: What similarities can be drawn between the late Buddy Holly and the modern-day Bloody Hollies?**

WESLEY: I would say that Buddy was always a songwriter first. Even though The Bloody Hollies are "crazy" and untamed live on stage, songwriting has always been most important to us.

**SKRATCH: What is the aesthetic importance of the skinny tie? Have you noticed a revival of skinny ties in rock music? Why are fat ties less rock 'n' roll than skinny ones?**

WESLEY: Ha. I think skinny ties are much more fashionable. I can't explain why the skinny tie is more rock 'n' roll. It just is, for some reason.

**SKRATCH: I noticed that you drew all of the cover art on the new album, *IF FOOTMEN TIRE YOU*. I understand that you own a graphic-design business. How did you get into graphic design, and what was the inspiration for the holy, angelic, Biblical figures portrayed on the album?**

WESLEY: I've always been an artist. Graphic design has sort of been a natural progression for me. Honestly, I think we live in apocalyptic times. A lot of the lyrics on the album reflect the times, I think. Aside from the images looking pretty cool, I thought it would be good to portray the evils of the world, redemption, salvation, etc., etc.

**SKRATCH: On the inside cover is a drawing of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, but the tree there is drawn as a skeleton with outstretched arms. What's the meaning behind this? Is there any sort of metaphor for life here?**

WESLEY: This image was taken from medieval art I found in some books I picked up. The skeleton is an obvious reference to the hidden

dangers of not making responsible decisions. At first glance, it's a beautiful image, but if you look close, you can see death awaiting a false move.

**SKRATCH: Some say the Garden of Eden represents temptation. What real-life place comes closest to your idea of the Garden of Eden?**

WESLEY: I learned the hard way what happens when you indulge yourself on the road in a rock 'n' roll band. Becoming a rock 'n' roll cliché is probably one of the worst things that can happen to someone who is as passionate about making music as I am.

**SKRATCH: The Bloody Hollies easily sound like a product of Detroit, but is it true that the band is not actually from Detroit? If not, what city has had the biggest influence on your sound, and how has your hometown shaped your style of music?**

WESLEY: Well, we came out of Buffalo, NY. Some say we sound pretty pissed off—but it would be hard not to be living in sub-zero temps on a regular basis, I suppose. Living in Buffalo is definitely a lesson from the school of hard knocks. But I found refuge in the music I liked. I don't

## The Bloody Hollies

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think living in another city would have made my songwriting any different.

**SKRATCH: IF FOOTMEN TIRE YOU** is your sophomore album (your debut being FIRE AT WILL). Do you feel a lot more pressure now on this second album because of expectations that may have been established by the first album?

WESLEY: I knew that the second one sounded a bit different than the first. I'm at a point in my life where I feel more comfortable making music that has integrity. I love FIRE AT WILL, but I don't want to keep producing the same album over and over again. What's the

point? Who knows? The next album might really be out there.

**SKRATCH: What have you done differently on this album that might show the evolution and growth of The Bloody Hollies since your debut album?**

WESLEY: I am starting to take my singing and my lyrics a lot more seriously. Also, I think this album is rooted in the blues a lot more heavily than the last. That was kind of important to me.

**SKRATCH: Although it's not easy to come up with an exact label for The Bloody Hollies, I can see why many people refer to your sound as "garage."**

Did the band, in fact, start out in a garage?  
**WESLEY:** Actually we started in our first drummer's living room—so they can call us "living-room rock."

**SKRATCH: How long did it take for the band to move to its first real stage, and what was that transition like?**

WESLEY: I can say it was pretty natural. When I was 19, I got to play on stage with Guitar Wolf for a song opening up for The Cramps. Anyone who knows Guitar Wolf knows that that was part of their shtick (i.e., to grab someone from the crowd to play with them). I don't think they expected me to fit in like I was actually in the band, though. I remember how great it was, and I knew I would probably be back on stage with my own band.

**SKRATCH: With the growing popularity of The White Stripes, how do you feel about blues/punk/garage music becoming more mainstream and acquiring a wider audience? I hear many similarities between these two bands. Is it possible that The Bloody Hollies could become "the next big thing"? How do you feel about that title?**

WESLEY: I try not to think about it. If the gods decide that we're the "next big thing," so be it. You can really go crazy trying to achieve that goal, though. All I can do in the meantime is make music I enjoy. Maybe people think we're

like The White Stripes because we're both "good."

**SKRATCH: Are live shows a huge part of the band's success and notoriety? What sets a Bloody Hollies show apart from any other show?**

WESLEY: No doubt the live show gave us some attention. Rarely do bands with a great live show have the songs to back it up; but I believe we have that going for us. People who have witnessed The Bloody Hollies' show routinely say it was one of the best they've ever seen. If they're going to spend the money to see a show, they deserve [something great], I guess.

**SKRATCH: In one word or phrase, describe the feeling you would want people to come away with after experiencing The Bloody Hollies live.**

WESLEY: I'd want them to be inspired—not just musically, but pretty much in anything they do.

[www.bloodyhollies.com](http://www.bloodyhollies.com)



"...I don't want to keep producing the same album over and over again. What's the point?"

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A Dozen Furies  
By Aimee Curran

Famed for their victory on what Marc Serrano calls a crappy MTV reality show, A Dozen Furies set up shop at Ozzfest and recently released their much-anticipated CONCEPTS OF FIRE. This five-piece post-hardcore machine is fucking awesome when it comes to showing their Texas pride and love making kids go crazy by spitting on each other.

SKRATCH talked with Serrano about the past, present, and future of the band so many hate to love.

SKRATCH: What inspired the songs on your new album?  
MARC: I think all the songs relate to just everyday life. A lot of the songs especially the newer tracks probably have to do with some of the struggles we've had to go through as far as how we got a lot of our stature and how people mainly know our name. People automatically assume things about us that we're not a real band or that we've worked very hard to get where we are. It really inspired us to reach out there and write a record that was killer in our eyes, because a lot of people don't know the whole story. They don't know that we've all been in bands the past 10 years and that we've all toured on our own. [...]

SKRATCH: What kind of feedback have you gotten since your album's been released?

MARC: So far it's been real positive. We've been real eager for the album to come out. [...] So far a lot of [the reviews I've read] have been positive [e.g.,]. These guys have really proved their worth. You should check out their album. You should check them out live. It's good to hear those things. There are always negative reviews but no one's going to put out a record and not get a negative review.

SKRATCH: What musical influences do you guys have that people wouldn't expect?  
MARC: If you look in our iPods, you would see so much crazy stuff. Every night usually when we're driving we take turns on the iPods sitting up front. We listen to the same things over and over again: Elton John, Prince, Tears for Fears, Duran Duran.... I mean, we just sit and sing Elton John and

Prince songs all night.

SKRATCH: What are your plans through 2006?  
MARC: It's just touring up until the holidays, and then at the beginning of the year, it's back to touring. We hope to get over to Europe. If things go well, we'll come back and write another record.

SKRATCH: Where are you now?

MARC: Well, we just left Canada, crossed over Niagara Falls, and we're in New York. The whole time we were in Canada, it rained every show. It was cool, because last night it was 3 in the morning, and we stopped at Niagara Falls, and there was no traffic. We sat there staring at it. It was really windy, so we got drenched from the wind blowing the falls all over us. It was amazing.

SKRATCH: What's your favorite thing about touring?

MARC: I think it would be being able to see all the different places; but in the past we've never been able to do it, because things have been so hectic that we haven't had much time in cities. But on this tour with GWAR, they have a big stage show, so they need a lot of time, and so they don't need us showing up until 5 so we plan to take the time to see things in every city. In the past it's always been getting the different crowd responses and getting to meet kids and hang out with other bands. It's cool to see things, because I have toured the country so many times and seen so little. It's sad.

SKRATCH: What does the RV look like after a couple days on the road?

MARC: Awwww, geez. Usually, it's candy wrappers everywhere, coke cans everywhere.... Everyone is so lazy about cleaning up. We're kind of lucky, because our driver and tour manager are kind of neat freaks. I'm a neat freak, too, but I don't snack as much as the other guys. Our trashcan is full within five minutes. Everyone is always snacking or drinking cokes.

SKRATCH: What do you do after a show?

MARC: Load up as quickly as we can, sit at the merch booth and hang out with the fans, and sign autographs. I think it's so much cooler

to buy a shirt or CD from someone in the band than from the merch guy standing around, so we always try to hang out and make ourselves accessible for fans you. [...]

SKRATCH: Is there any type of person in the crowd you don't like to see?

MARC: Kids who just stand there, or just some kid who assumes that we suck, thinking, Oh, it's just that MTV band. We get right in their face, and so they have no choice but to start paying attention. Sometimes we can turn a middle finger into metal horns by the end of the night.

**"SOMETIMES WE CAN TURN A MIDDLE FINGER INTO METAL HORNS BY THE END OF THE NIGHT"**



was this crappy reality show that was trying to embarrass people, crappy reality moments as opposed to, Here's a real band. Here's their music. Here's them playing. [...] That's what made it so hard: they didn't show all those aspects. A lot of the bands on the show weren't touring bands [...] working real hard at the time. We had done the whole U.S. before we were on the show. Kids don't know that they just see some band thrown up in some audition. They just didn't give enough real band information or background. That's the only thing that bummed us out or made it hard for us to prove ourselves.

SKRATCH: If you went back and had the choice to do it again knowing what you know now, would you do it?

MARC: I think we'd definitely do it. [...] Everybody has to get their name out there; everybody has to get some sort of attention. We've been playing in bands for 10 years, and our break happened to be some crappy MTV reality show.

SKRATCH: What is the band's ultimate goal?

MARC: I think we want to be successful enough to make a living at it and not have to

struggle. Being in a band is really hard. It's a struggle to make money and make it a career. I think everyone would be happy if we could make enough to buy ourselves some homes and just have a life and live off it. I'm not talking million-dollar homes and five cars or anything like that; we're real modest dudes. It would be cool to buy a nice little house and have it paid off. [and to] have the opportunity to do other things. Like, I am kind of the manager guy, so I would like to manage another band and produce do well enough to open other doors.

SKRATCH: You've been quoted saying you are a bunch of redneck fucks. Do you still agree with that statement?

MARC: I think that was taken a little out of context. I mean, we're definitely Texas boys; we show our Texas pride, for sure. We're kicking around our big belt buckles or kicking around our cowboy boots. We flew our Texas flag during Ozzfest, and we had Texas flag pants. We definitely have a lot of Texas pride, but we're not spitting in spittoons or anything crazy like that. I don't have a cowboy hat yet but I'm thinking about it.

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## CORETTA SCOTT



CORETTA SCOTT  
By Brandon Russell

Spokane, WA-based emo rockers Coretta Scott aren't politically motivated. Their music has no message about civil rights, women's rights, or social equality. In fact, the band's eldest member wasn't born until 13 years after Coretta Scott King's husband and heralded civil-rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. Rather, the name, is the result of an original ill-fated moniker that met its demise on King's birthday. The band was originally called The Widow Jenkins. But on that mid-January day in 2004, guitarist/founder Preston Thomason received word that another, older band had the same name. So Thomason and the other members of the band put their heads together and picked a new name. "It was just a coincidence that we needed a new name on Martin Luther King Day," Thomason says. "But Coretta Scott works because it's a name that carries a

lot of integrity. It just sounds right." But political commentary isn't their style: straight-up, poppy screamo is-and they're doing it just how it's supposed to be done.

With comparisons being made to such like-minded genre heavyweights as Thrice, Thursday, and Hawthorne Heights, the boys in Coretta Scott have earned a reputation as one of the best up-and-comers in the emo world. But when Thomason hears these comparisons made, he is often baffled. "People think we are influenced by all these bands, but I have never heard a lot of the bands they mention. Of course, Thrice and Thursday are great, but I have never even HEARD Hawthorne Heights, so I don't see how we can be inspired by their music." But with their catchy melodies and vocal mix of high-pitched crooning and screaming choruses, their following is increasing daily. As with bands of similar stature, the Web community My Space has proven an effective

means of publicity. "My Space has done so much for smaller bands like us," singer Seth Woodward says. "It really keeps us in contact with all the kids and is a great way for our current fans to refer us to their friends. It's just great exposure."

With enough piercings, hair gel, tattoos, and fashion accessories to make any '80s glam band proud, it is clear that fashion holds a high priority with Coretta Scott. "We get judged on how we look all the time," Thomason says. "But we are all very fashion-conscious. I enjoy looking good."

[www.CorettaScott.com](http://www.CorettaScott.com)

## CRITERIA



CRITERIA  
By Brandon Russell

By day, Stephen Pedersen is a clean-cut, Duke-educated corporate entertainment lawyer. With pressed suit and briefcase in hand, Pedersen represents the stereotypical corporation behind the scenes in the music industry. But by night, just as Clark Kent became Superman, Pedersen takes the roll of superhero to the masses as frontman of Omaha-based rock outfit Criteria. Formed in 2003, Criteria have established themselves worldwide with rich, harmony-infused guitar riffs that form an intriguing relationship with a pop-based rhythm section. But the element that really sets the band apart from so many others in a watered-down pop/rock genre is Pedersen and his sharp, insightful lyrics. This is evident right out of the gate on Criteria's latest release, *WHEN WE BREAK*, as Pedersen laments the incompatibility and duality of his life's loves: the law and rock 'n' roll. "I'm stuck in a

basement world / Where even if I tried / To make rock my living / It wouldn't coincide / So how do I reconcile / Six years of life / With irrational urges? / Well, I'd still stay home / You're preventing the world from hearing my songs / Imagine if the world could get behind it / The combined strength would propel us all / And release from our stilted social norms." His jobs as a lawyer and a top-notch musician have clashed throughout his career. As he says, writing music, promoting the band, and touring aren't exactly conducive to succeeding in law. "The majority of my adult life has been a balancing act," Pedersen says. "But I've always found a balance between the two." As the music has-and always will-come first, Pedersen says that when Criteria started picking up momentum, he was forced to quit a job at an Omaha law firm to go on tour. In fact, the entire band did the same sort of thing. But it has paid off. The touring opportunities have yet to wane, as Criteria just finished their

second U.S. tour and is gearing up for their second European tour.

Without a doubt, his two chosen paths have created constant conflict. But has there been a time when his law skills have paid off in the music business? "Occasionally, the promoters didn't behave as they said they would," Pedersen says. "For example, the promoter will try to take a cut of our merchandise sales or fail to pay us our guarantee even after they have signed papers clearly spelling out the deal. When something like that happens, I show them the contract, and everything usually ends up working out."

## IN FLAMES



IN FLAMES  
By Marcia Taylor

In Flames has come a long way from its beginnings in Gothenburg, Sweden, where it began as a part of the '90s death-metal scene. It's now one of the most popular metal bands in the world. The band has been quite prolific, releasing three EPs and eight full-lengths in 10 years, as well as touring extensively and playing with a variety of bands (from older acts like Iron Maiden and Slayer to newer acts like Slipknot). In Flames also played the main stage at this year's Ozzfest. The five-piece was founded by guitarist Jesper Strömblad, and although the line-up changed during the first couple of releases, the current line-up of Björn Gelotte on guitar, Anders Fridén on vocals, Peter Iwers on bass, and Daniel Svensson on drums has been in place since 1998.

Throughout In Flames' career, the band's sound has evolved, and the resulting changes have created some controversy among metal fans, who tend to utter the clichéd opinion that the band has "sold

out." Band members insist that while their sound has changed, it is a reflection of their growth as musicians and a desire to try new things. Bassist Iwers explains, "Always the easiest way to look at our music is food. You are making a stew. Each time you have to top yourself. Each time we add new ingredients." Adds vocalist Fridén, "The most important thing a band can do is grow. When I hear bands say, 'We kind of lost our roots and we needed to look back,' I get mad because I think you should always bring your roots with you and keep evolving. If you want to go back to your roots, then you've lost something on the way." The band is known for its tight guitar harmonies, melody, and big sound in the vein of Iron Maiden. In fact, that may be all the band members' first and dearest musical influence. Iwers also says he thinks that the current metal scene is "back to where we started. Metal is bigger again in the media. It started with the new-wave heavy metal, then the new American bands."

In Flames' last release, *SOUNDTRACK TO YOUR ESCAPE*, came out in 2004.

As with most of its releases, there was some controversy about it being more radio-friendly than past albums. However, the band was very pleased with the record and has been touring steadily since then. In addition, the group spent time in the studio recording a new record, *COME CLARITY*, to be released in February 2006. Will fans find it quite different from *SOUNDTRACK TO YOUR ESCAPE*? "It's not a dramatic departure," reveals Iwers. "All of our records come as a pair-two, then a change. I don't know what to say. It's a fast, melodic metal record."

Meanwhile, if you missed the band at Ozzfest, you should be able to see In Flames in the U.S. after the new record comes out. Their next step is to join Motorhead on tour in the U.K. at the end of October. Iwers last words are direct and simple: "Our music is so melodic that everyone appreciates it." So even if you don't always give metal a chance, check out In Flames. To learn more about the band, you can visit its Website at [www.inflames.com](http://www.inflames.com).

## MADBALL



### MADBALL

By Brandon Russell

In 1994, deep into a European tour, New York City hardcore punks Madball were on their way to Spain for a four-show stint. Upon arriving, they were informed that three of the four shows would be cancelled. As it turns out, a Spanish journalist labeled the band racist and fascist, and they were boycotted. To the boys in Madball—who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds—the accusation was outrageous. "It was crazy, if you think about it," says guitar player Mitts. "Madball has always been a mixed band racially. How could Madball possibly be racist or fascist?"

As they say, time heals all wounds, and Madball is back 11 years later for their second shot at a four-show run through Spain. Madball has endured over 15 years, seven full-length albums, and a few lineup changes, but the band's character remains unbreakable. For proof, look no further than their progress in the past

decade-and-a-half. Madball was started in 1988 by then-12-year-old Freddy Cricien. Cricien, the younger brother of Agnostic Front's Roger Miret, founded the band on a string of throwaway Agnostic Front songs. The band was merely a side project until 1993, when Cricien established himself with three competent, committed musicians. They started touring, put out two LPs, and Madball had its feet firmly planted on the New York City hardcore map. They have since gone on to acquire a new guitar player (Mitts) and drummer (Rigg Ross) and have toured with the biggest names in their genre, including Sick of it All, Slayer, Sepultura, Black Sabbath, and Hatebreed.

Now, in the final months of 2005, Madball is on the brink of genuine rock stardom. They just released a new record, *LEGACY*, which fans and critics agree is their best to date; and their video for the song "Heaven-Hell" is getting play on MTV's *HEADBANGER'S BALL*. The response to the video has been overwhelmingly

positive, as it is in the running for MTV's Best Heavy Video of 2005. "We are really proud of the new LP," Mitts says. "We feel it's our proudest moment as a band, and we intend to tour as much as possible to support it. Then, hopefully, we will take things to the next level."

While their domestic success continues to flourish, the band says that Europe, which has shunned them in the past, is a real highlight of life in Madball. "Hardcore has always been more accepted in Europe than it has in the U.S. as a whole," Mitts says. "Areas like New York, Boston, and D.C. all have strong hardcore scenes; but in Europe, this music has never gone out of style. We like it here, though, because we get to play longer sets. When we're here, it's almost always as a headliner."

## MEWITHOUTYOU



### MEWITHOUTYOU

By Matt Edmund

"Trainwreck music-video nightmare" is how drummer Rickie Mazzotta would sum up his band *meWithoutYou* in one sentence. Although one would disagree after taking a listen to this Philadelphia band, it's clear to see that there is more to them than meets the eye. Their musical journey started in 2000 with brothers Mike (guitar) and Aaron (lead vocals) Weiss throwing together a small side project of close friends and musicians. The outcome didn't amount to much, but things changed for the better. "So things went into a new direction with our guitar sounds," Mike says, "and noticed that Aaron's lyrics were actually really different than the stuff we were influenced by at the time. We recorded a little five-song EP for a local label and tried to start touring whenever we could find the time. We played at a festival that following year, were seen by a label, and signed shortly after that."

It's five years later, and *meWithoutYou* now finds themselves at top of their musical game. In October of 2004, they released their second album on Tooth and Nail Records, *CATCH FOR US THE FOXES*. It's a collection of moving lyrics set to a canvas of guitar strums and strong backbeats. Weiss's lyrics are poetic, deep with emotion and feelings. "I steal most of the best lyrics, and the rest I get by sifting through the pages and pages of lousy words I've written to find a few acceptable ones," he says. One of the best examples on this album has to be "January 1979", who's video is up for an MTV video award. The band is pleased with the nomination, even if the video-making process isn't the greatest thing. "I'd like to say I don't care, but I was happy to hear that, Aaron says. "Our families are proud of us, which feels nice. Otherwise, I dunno. It's pretty cool, 'cause I do like making videos—even though it's really goofy."

Being on Tooth and Nail seems like it

would bring about the chance of having your music stereotyped as being God-fearing Christian psychobabble, as *Tooth and Nail* is a predominantly Christian label. But this doesn't seem to drag the band down. "We try to do everything in our power to counter those stereotypes by the decisions we make," says Mike. "We just want to be seen as a band like any other in terms of where we play and where you can buy the CD."

As for the future, *meWithoutYou* you are currently working on writing some new music and will be back in the studio early next year. They are currently on a North American tour with *Coheed and Cambria*, *Dredg*, and *Blood Brothers*. Check out [www.mewithoutyou.com](http://www.mewithoutyou.com) and [www.toothandnail.com](http://www.toothandnail.com) for more information.

## NODES OF RANVIER



### NODES OF RANVIER

By Janelle Jones

Jumping from trend to trend just to make a buck and realize instant yet fleeting success. Don't expect that kind of sorry spinelessness from metal/hardcore purveyors Nodes of Ranvier. No, the South Dakota-based band won't be peddling the all-too-familiar, watered-down stuff that's deemed "pop-punk" nowadays anymore—despite their understandable desire to garner enough success to actually subsist off of what they love: creating brutal music. For now, our boys are stuck in SD doing temp jobs to afford themselves the luxury of keeping this band going, recording records, and getting their powerful, oft-heavy yet melodic songs out to everyone whilst on tour.

Their latest opus, *THE YEARS TO COME* (Facedown), is the band's third full-length and first with their revamped line-up, which sees Nick Murphy as new vocalist alongside guitarists Jake and Jon, drummer

Ryan, and bassist Terry. This album also marks the first time Murphy's written a majority of the lyrics. Inspired by "everyday things," he tries "to be as straightforward and honest as possible. [Ideas] can come from everything," he explains. "That's one thing we try to strive for: to not be one-sided"—meaning that the lyrics don't adhere to one single topic or message, but rather delve into feelings the vocalist is experiencing at any given moment. And he LOVES the process. To wit, he's already been working on new material.

Musically, *THE YEARS TO COME* is in-your-face, aggressive metal with growled vocals intermittently supplemented by a cleaner, more melodic style; ferocious drumming; thunderous bass; and a double onslaught of well-crafted, mean guitar riffs. The one major curveball comes right smack in the middle of the album with slow, melodic, moving crooner "Grave"—a fitting title, as the song is exceedingly somber in comparison to

the record's other 11 tracks.

After not too much in the way of touring so far this year (the band had recorded the album early '05 to have it ready for a spring release, but then, upon careful listening of the final product, took some time to fix it up to make it the best it could be), the next six months will find NOR much more active, as they set off on a Midwest/West tour in November with The Agony Scene, and then they will be out throughout the winter and spring. In fact, Murphy was QUITE excited that he'd just gotten his passport the day before our chat, as he and the band are heading to Europe for the first time next year—something (not surprisingly) the band's been looking forward to doing for a while. [www.nodesofranvier.com](http://www.nodesofranvier.com)

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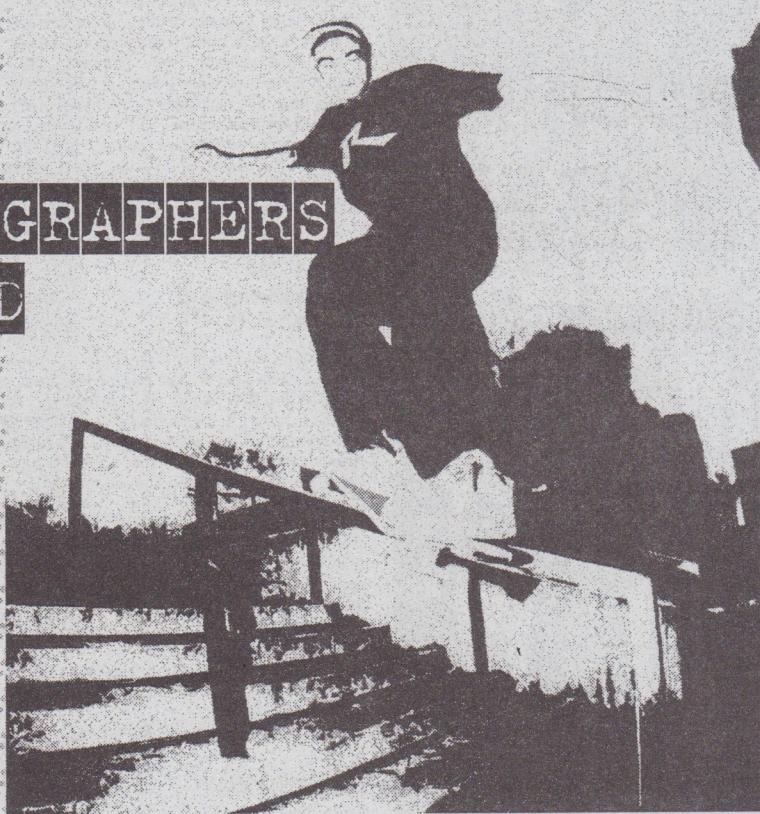
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# LiVE REviEWS

## FROM AUTUMN TO ASHES ARMOR FOR SLEEP EMMANUEL

October 1, 2005 @ SOMA (San Diego, CA)  
By Thomas Murray

Sometimes SOMA has an attractive, tattooed female doing the pat-downs, but not tonight: some goateed guy rubbed me over and nervously inquired as to whether or not the hardness in my pocket was a pen. (SOMA doesn't let you bring pens in, for some goddamn reason.) I fessed up and handed over my out-of-ink decoy, and the doofus was all proud of himself. He was unaware, however, that I had a fully functional pen in each one of my shoes. I am hip to SOMA's games—and once again, I outwitted them.

Unfortunately, I missed the first band, Science, which turned out to be Francis and Mark's (from FATA) side project. Damn. So, Emmanuel kicked off my night of music. Ugh. Typical, so very typical and annoying—and I just wasn't in any kind of mood. I suffered through two songs and sulked my way out to the entrance room so that I could stare at wristbands and inhale the scent of 13-year-olds who all wore the same exact outfits as the guys onstage.

Days prior to this show, I was in Hot Topic assuaging my addiction to belt buckles. I asked the kid behind the counter if he was going to the FATA

show—and, sure enough, he was. He informed me that he was actually quite excited to see Armor for Sleep, so naturally I looked forward to them a little more than I would have if I had never heard anything about them. Well, I got all excited, only to get viciously blue-balled by a truly bad performance. I found myself thinking "Wow, I really don't care about any of this." Song after whiny, annoying song, I thought about leaving. I couldn't figure it out. Just what the hell gave these people the idea that they had any business up on that stage? I stuck around hoping for a distraction from the music, like a spidery teen fight or some wild topless blonde with full sleeves running around bleeding from the armpits. Nothing, though. "FATA better rock this place, man," I thought.

Ask, and you shall receive. From Autumn to Ashes rips right into "Milligram Smile", and all the Scriptos in the place suddenly had a stronger sense of community. It seems like I blinked and SOMA was packed, like they were giving out free shit. Intelligent people must have timed their arrival on in order to see FATA's performance only and to avoid the opening bands. I swore that somewhere I heard that Hot Topic kid is laughing his ass off at me—for I had fallen for his heartless ruse. The third song, "Inapprope", is off the new album, ABANDON YOUR FRIENDS. Something interesting occurred when lead singer Ben Perri handed the lead microphone over to Francis, who normally just drums and sings the melodic choruses: some guy named Cornbread took over on drums, and Francis geeked himself all over

stage with that beautiful voice and newly-swelling arrogance. I dug his awkward sway; however, I couldn't let go of the idea that he reminded me of the psychic mutant in the wheelchair from X-2 (not Xavier, but the other one, the illusionist). For the fourth song, Ben returns to take the mic, but he is swilling deeply on a bottle of vitamin water. Apparently, he is sick and has perhaps been hitting the bottle a bit hard. I heard one kid call him husky, but I wouldn't say that, because it is mean. The next few songs were "Eulogy for an Angel", "Lilacs and Lolita" (which went out to the sound crew), "Where You Draw the Line" (which went out to the guys in Emmanuel—ew) "Take Her to the Music Store", and "Alive Out of Habit". And, of course, the kids were doing their bizarre dances. I watched some kid in a Winger T-shirt laying out people left and right. I think I saw several shirtless men with similar tattoos drag him behind a pile of speakers and do god knows what to him. Cornbread came back out so that Francis could sing "Kansas City 90210". For the thinkers in the audience, Francis promised to explain the meaning after the show, because (according to him) the majority of the audience just wants to punch each other in the face. Sorry, Francis, but some people aren't rock stars and don't have their lives figured out yet. That doesn't mean that they don't like to think. FATA finished a solid show with what appeared, at first, to be a cover of Foghat's "Slow Ride". This was amusing but shifted into a convincing finale of "The After Dinner Payback". "Bravo," I screamed, and obediently returned to my perch on a creaky bar stool.

## THRICe UNDEROATH THE BLED VEDA

October 7, 2005 @ UCI Bren Center  
(Irvine, CA)  
By Luke Skywalker

Upon arrival, you couldn't help but notice the onslaught of young concertgoers wearing T-shirts of the night's lineup. Hours before arriving, Underoath completed an in-store signing of the re-release of THEY'RE ONLY CHASING SAFETY (with new album art and a special-edition DVD). Outside, I spoke with drummer Aaron Gillespie, who mentioned that outside "it's like someone turned a camera on and watched us for a week-and-a-half" regarding the DVD. And before I left to go inside, Gillespie informed me that Veda is "pretty legit". Lead singer Kristen May has the "most gorgeous voice."

Veda was completing their set as I entered the monstrous venue. Lead singer Kristen May blew everyone away with her gorgeous, melodic vocal range. With a unique and repetitive sound, Veda seemed out of place amongst the heavy rock bands of the evening. Surprisingly, the crowd responded to the group with appreciative applause and took time to offer their admiration during set changes at the merch tables.

The Bled entered the stage to an uproarious cheer from a crowd of fans, all of whom were

educated about the band's songs and lyrics. This young group from Tucson, AZ, mesmerized the crowd into a fluid headbang with "Last American Cowboy" and kept the crowd singing with "My Assassin". Chock full of massive hardcore breakdowns, the quintet also included different instrumental effects, allowing for melodic anthems between furious metal riffs.

The electric mass of fans erupted as soon as the venue lights dimmed in anticipation of Underoath's triumphant return to Southern California. Shriek screams of pleasure rang out from young girls, as the East Coast group stormed the stage after raising the banner of their new album cover as an epic movie quote played through the house speakers to introduce the band. Quickly progressing through their usual 40-minute set of nine songs, lead singer Spencer Chamberlain introduced two nameless demos that sounded amazing. As is common during an Underoath set, guitarist Tim McTague and keyboardist Chris Dudley played their instruments with a ferocity that led to exhaustion, while Gillespie nursed injured knuckles after they had finished. Crowd-surfers floated across the stage barriers as the sextet played with their renowned fervor. In grand-finale fashion, Chamberlain promoted the love of Jesus Christ before delving into "A Boy Brushed Red Living in Black and White".

The night grew in intensity as the highly-charged audience impatiently waited for the emergence of hometown heroes Thrice. The youngsters in the crowd methodically chanted different mantras, while veterans watched on as the nostalgic DOOMBALL made an appearance. A new setup of instruments was laid out on the stage, and as the

erotic sound of the Moog reverberated off the stadium walls, the new VHEISSU banner was raised, and the men of Thrice walked confidently and comfortably on to the stage to begin their grand return. In an all-too-familiar look of a Freddy Krueger-striped shirt, lead singer Dustin Kensrue uttered the words of their new single, "Image of the Invisible". In unison, the loyal Thrice Alliance echoed Kensrue's lyrics. Many new songs were to follow throughout the night, but a strong connection resonated with the listeners, as they pumped their fists in the air with every beat. Still, the energy in the place seemed to have peaked, as the group dedicated "Artist in the Ambulance" to their enthusiasts in the audience. As this flawless rendition of the song played on and as kids dissipated all their energy in the pit, no one could foresee what was to come. In a chilling moment of musical genius, Kensrue led the audience in an a cappella chorus of "Cold Cash, Colder Hearts". At this moment, I couldn't help but reminisce of my early Thrice concerts, when I would be screaming each word with passion as though they were meant for God himself. In a pseudo-final song, the group played the hugely popular single from THE ILLUSION OF SAFETY, "Deadbolt". The crowd had completely exhausted themselves and began to disperse, the stage lights re-lit. Kensrue returned with USC's string section for an acoustic rendition of "Stare at the Sun". For one final hardcore anthem, the entire band returned to play "To Awake and Avenge the Dead", Kensrue leaving the stage with microphone in hand to sing with the crowd.

Truly, Thrice's 20-song set reigned a passion for their live performances and inspired many to become avid Thrice loyalists.

THE CRASH CADILLACS  
MATAMOSKA  
KNOCKOUT  
VOODOO GLOW SKULLS

October 7, 2005 @ the Alley (Fullerton, CA)  
Text and photos by Audiophile

I missed maybe one song of The Crash Cadillacs, but hey, I was mostly on time—and that's what counts. Usually I don't enjoy opening bands—mostly because they suck; but that is not the case for The Crash Cadillacs. They were actually a very decent rockabilly band. (I'm not a very big rockabilly person, though so you might not want to take my word for it.) That dude on the stand-up bass sure slapped the hell out of that thing. His hand was a blur for most of their set. It reminded me of the episode of COPS where the trailer-trash husband is beating his wife (which is every episode, I guess). Yeah, his hand was moving that fast. For more on The Crash Cadillacs, go to [WWW.Myspace.Com/Thecrashcadillacs](http://WWW.Myspace.Com/Thecrashcadillacs).

Matamoska was original, to say the least. It's official: Orange County hardcore has gotten out of control. Although some of their songs and melodies were okay, the grunting/shouting/hardcore vocals were not. I admit that I HATE ORANGE COUNTY HARDCORE BANDS, but if you enjoy that kind of crap and you're also a ska fan, you'll enjoy Matamoska more than I. Look for them at [WWW.Matamoska.Com](http://WWW.Matamoska.Com).



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BRITISH SEA POWER

October 8, 2005 @ Shoreline Amphitheatre (Mountain View, CA)  
By Jeff Lambert

The beautifully entertaining part of all-day festivals is the eclectic group of concertgoers who are drawn to the same place for different reasons. Today we have the teenage girls sporting their newly bought KILLERS T-shirts (isn't there a rule about not wearing the shirt of the band you are seeing?), the scene kids trying their best NOT to fit in, the college guys drinking their brains out, and the oddly out-of-place old man who came by himself. Needless to say, people watching at events like these can keep me occupied for hours.

Knockout's lead singer is a knockout indeed. Hello, Ewan McGregor look-alike—call me. Anyway, this ska/reggae/punk band sounds like The Police met Sublime one night while drunk, one thing led to another, and Knockout were born. They were pretty good—and I'm not just saying that because I want to tap the lead singer. I think they did a Sublime cover. I KNOW

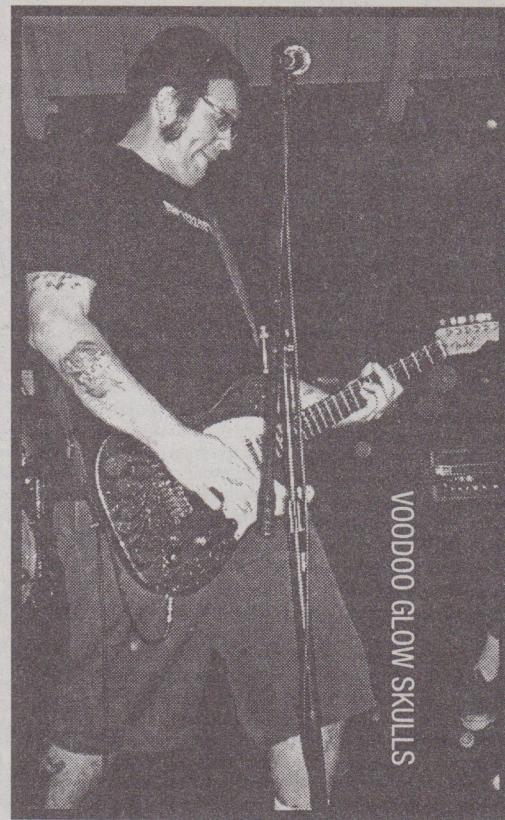
the singer sang the "nah-nah-nah-nah-nah-nah" part from "The Date Rape Song" during one of their "original" songs. Perhaps it was a small tribute? They also did a reggae/punk cover of Bad Religion's "Generator", which sucked. That was the worst song they played. Bad Religion are rolling around in their non-existent graves right now. But seriously, call me, lead singer, or shoot me an e-mail. I'd contact them myself, but I can't seem to find any sort of Website for the band.

I love Voodoo Glow Skulls, I really do. I was surprised to find them at the Alley; but just because the venue was small didn't mean they didn't rock the joint. The lead singer in a Mexican wrestler mask was sexy: He removed it after the first song (much to my disappointment) and continued on in a hat and glasses. The ensemble's trumpet player was a little late, and the band teased him a bit about it. They blasted out some killer songs that night—as usual—including "Left Foot In", "Fat Randy", "Empty Bottles", and "Say Goodbye". This was a perfect performance. You absolutely MUST check Voodoo Glow Skulls out and see them when they come to your town. For more information on that and their upcoming tour with Flogging Molly, go to [WWW.Voodooglowskulls.Com](http://WWW.Voodooglowskulls.Com).

Making our way to the seats, I notice an unusual setup on stage: a mini-jungle, complete with tree branches, bamboo chutes, and stuffed birds. Before we know what to make of this remarkable assortment, the relatively unknown British Sea Power neatly files on stage. Looking straight out of a Wes Anderson flick, the ensemble (clad in maritime garb) grab their instruments and break into action. With their appealing brand of guitar pop, British Sea Power touches on Joy Division, Bowie, and The Fixx in creating their own musical manifestation. The performance itself sounds great and—although the amphitheater is still filling up—those in attendance are treated to a likable show. After standing almost perfectly still for the first 25 minutes, things take a turn for the absurd: the keyboardist puts a tree branch from the stage design down the back of his shirt, grabs a tom-tom, and marches his way offstage and into the crowd. After taking a sip of one spectator's soda, he makes his way up and down several aisles before marching to the lawn. Meanwhile, in a failed attempt to stuff his own guitar down his shirt, the guitarist has his instrument caught in his collar and is swinging it around in circles. The guitar eventually

comes crashing to the ground before he manages to pull off a headstand at center stage—yes, a headstand. Feeling left out, the lead singer drops his guitar, steps on it a few times, then grabs one of the stuffed birds from the set and ritually offers it to the crowd. All the while, the bassist and drummer maintain some sense of order by keeping the song going. A once-subdued performance went from zero to wacky in a blink of an eye. As bizarre as it seems, it was an interesting punctuation on an already solid performance.

Bringing a solid fan base and a homemade background banner, the epic rock trio Doves takes the stage as the sun fades into the horizon. These British rockers have popped up in TV and movie soundtracks from time to time in the past few years and recently released their second full-length album, THE LAST BROADCAST (Capitol). Much more upbeat than their debut, THE LAST BROADCAST neatly makes the transfer from the recording studio to the stage. Strong songwriting and a cool confidence give the band a solid foundation, and they prove more than capable of capturing the attention of the suddenly-growing crowd. Highlighted by a



rousing rendition of "Pounding", Doves have no trouble keeping the crowd interested during their 40-minute set—not an easy task for a band stretching some songs over a seven- or eight-minute span.

I apologize in advance for adding to the already monumental hype surrounding this next band, but The Arcade Fire once again stole the show. If you've been living under a rock for the past year, a group of quirky Canadians calling themselves The Arcade Fire have lit up stages from L.A. to Toronto with their flawless musical precision, contagious energy, and larger-than-life stage presence. Tonight, they simply put on a musical clinic, a 45-minute lesson on how to put on a rock concert. Opening with their usual favorite, "Wake Up", the gang of seven sing the chorus in perfect synchronization and hit every note in stride. Their collective energy is captivating and sets a tone for the audience to follow. From the get-go, the crowd is on their feet and the outdoor theatre is jumping and dancing with every soaring note. Between songs, the bandmates all switch instruments, seemingly taking turns showing off their individual musical talents. More humble than most, their individual skills are overshadowed by their ability to perform as one cohesive unit. Bringing their typically wacky antics with them, some members of the band start a wrestling match onstage before spilling into the crowd for more raucousness—but somehow they manage to make it back on stage right when the rest of the

band needs them to perform. They fly through their set with ease before breaking into "Neighborhood #3 (Lights Out)" and segue into "Rebellion (Lies)" for their finale. I've seen them perform several times in the last year or so, and the set list stays pretty much the same; but each performance is unique and superior to its predecessor. The Arcade Fire continue to impress audiences across the continent with their refreshing sound and creative performance.

How do you follow a performance like the one The Arcade Fire just put on? Well, if you're Modest Mouse, you just get fucking wasted and hope the audience cares about your performance as little as you do. Don't get me wrong: I am a longtime fan of the grungy rockers from the Northwest and have seen them play on several occasions, but the show they put on tonight was disappointing, at best. After opening with three or four tracks off their 2004 release, Isaac and the boys treated the crowd to "Cowboy Dan", "Dramamine", and "3rd Planet". Usually this is a good thing, but tonight Isaac's guitar work on "3rd Planet" was sloppy and he seemed to have trouble singing directly into the microphone—which essentially ruined one of their better songs. The entire show seemed disjointed, with too much downtime between songs and no cohesiveness within the group. Maybe the long day of partying got the best of them, or maybe they just weren't prepared, but for the sake of their fans, I hope this

type of a performance is more of an accident than a growing trend.

About now I ask myself why every movable object on the stage is suddenly covered in tin foil. Silly me—it's for the killer light show we are sure to see (quite the transformation from the plain setting Modest Mouse and The Arcade Fire called home earlier in the evening). The Shoreline stage has transformed into a giant metallic reflector just waiting to impress the audience with a light show almost as bombastic as the headlining band itself. A shiny silver backdrop is grandly adorned with the name "The Killers" as quartet take the stage. I can't help but cringe when they are greeted by thousands of high-pitched screams from the many teenage girls in attendance. "Yeah, I know," says guitarist David Keuning (to think I had the nerve to call them bombastic). Led by frontman Brandon Flowers, they dive right into their synth/pop/new-wave dance-a-thon with a style I call "New Order meets The Strokes." Playing to the audience without missing a beat, The Killers quickly prove they are worth the price of admission. They pull out all the stops and make good on playing everything they got. Their obvious arrogance is a slight turn-off, but nonetheless, they provide the crowd with an impressive light show—and a pretty good rock show. Needless to say, many youngsters went home happy, as The Killers put on a spectacle for their loud and loyal fans.

## THE EXPLOITED CHANNEL 3 FUNERAL DRESS THE S.C.A.B.S. SIMON SAYS DIE

October 8, 2005 @ the Galaxy Concert  
Theater (Santa Ana, CA)  
Photos and text by Matt Logan

On the surface, Saturday, October 8, may have seemed like an ordinary night in the safe little town of Santa Ana, CA. Possibly a few cars broken into, random vandalism, drugs, theft, assault, police violence...But there was something special about that Saturday: punk veterans The Exploited stopped in town to play some old-style punk for their new and diehard fans. The good, the bad, and the ugly punks came out to see The Exploited...Actually, just the bad and ugly fans were there.

### THE EXPLOITED



The show was supposedly going to start with a band called BeerZone, according to one of the Galaxy's show organizers. Apparently, BeerZone was getting serious beat-downs by a few unknown assailants for two nights prior to the show and were threatened to get handed an ass-kicking if they showed up. They supposedly called in two hours before the doors opened and said they were unable to attend due to threats. What happened to the days when punks were unafraid to give or receive a beating? I'm not going to waste any more time on these bitches, so let's move on to the bands that actually played.

Opening the show was the unimpressive, unsatisfactory, and unsavory Simon Says Die. They got all the cookie-cutter "punk" commentary out of the way early on in the show, which is helpful. At one point, the lead singer was making a reference to people who pass out due to alcohol consumption and said, "What do you do to them then? Yeah, that's

right: you jerk off on 'em! YEAH!" Their music was choked out into the hazy air of the Galaxy with moderate talent. I caught myself enjoying a fraction of their last song.

When The S.C.A.B.S. (Social Critics Against Bullshit Systems) took the stage is when the show really got started. Frontman Johnny Didatz got the crowd screaming when he said, "Fuck the security here tonight, fuck 'em. Fuck my boss and fuck my job. We are here for you guys tonight." The S.C.A.B.S. played to a swarming pit, while Didatz drank, threw, and spit beer as he yelled into

the dimly-lit theater. This self-proclaimed "drunk rock" band played with all the passion of bona fide punks, as they flooded the venue with hard-hitting sounds that proved they are a force to be recognized. Check 'em out at [www.thescabs.com](http://www.thescabs.com).

Funeral Dress plays a streetpunk or street rock 'n' roll style like English bands did it in the mid '80s. Fists shook in the air and sweat covered every riotous body in the pit and on stage. "Free Beer for the Punx" was a crowd-favorite, and the lead singer actually gave away half a bottle to some guy. They capped off a thrilling performance with a cover of "Down Under" by Men at Work.

Born from the asphalt rubble of Cerritos, CA, Channel 3 is all about ripping the hell out of a stage with their tried and true style of rugged

### THE EXPLOITED



punk rock. They played an amazing set so full of power and heat that it felt like steam was pouring out of the speakers. Perhaps feeling his age during the show (as I often do because of the young faces in the crowd), Mike Magrann (lead vocals, guitar) raised his hand above his eyes to shield it from the spotlights and peered over the crowd like a sailor searching for land and said, "Whoa, did your mom drop you guys off tonight?" Some random kid immediately shouted back, "Your mom dropped me off!" Magrann simply replied, "Oh, okay," and tore

### FUNERAL DRESS



into their last few songs.

Leading his band The Exploited, vocalist Wattie Buchan marched onstage with his ex-military swagger. Adorning a red dreadlock/braided mohawk and a shirt that read "Anarchy Terror Crew" on the back, he looked at the audience

CHANNEL 3

### THE S.C.A.B.S.



tried to make it onstage, Buchan kicked him back down into the pit. During "Fuck the System", a couple of skinheads started fighting in the pit. Violent fists were flying, as a fight that began between two idiots soon turned into a brawl of 10 or more before security broke it up. The Exploited left the stage when their set was finished, but screams from the crowd for "one more song" called them back. They started their encore by saying, "Let's see some violence, let's see some sex," then roared into "Sex and Violence". They played two more after that and walked offstage leaving the crowd with ringing in their ears, a few bruises, and the memory of one hell of a punk show.

### THE ADICTS

#### BANG SUGAR BANG

October 7, 2005 @ the House of Blues  
(Hollywood, CA)

Text by Ian Wilkins

Photos by Mark A. Whitaker

### THE ADICTS



(Since I am writing about only two bands in this article and the law of SKRATCH states I must write a minimum of 750 words. I will waste at least 250 of them solely on the mood of the night. In fact, don't even read the last paragraph: it will more than likely just be some type of gibberish.)

A soft Southern Californian breeze is barely ruffling my long, flowing blonde locks as I make my way into the House of Blues. The Seven jeans I threw on in my haste to make it to the show on time sets me apart from the hundreds of young juveniles all wearing the customary black outfits adorned with their colorful punk patches. After entering the famed HOB, I decide to jump-start my evening, and so I ask the distraught bartender for my usual two Bud Lights, which costs me a mere 12 bucks. This leads me to believe that the HOB doesn't really give a shit about us poor alcoholics.

48 George Washingtons (that's 10 minutes of drinking for me) is how much it cost me to see one of my favorite bands of all time take the stage, Bang Sugar Bang. They are an L.A. band who has recently signed to the famous SOS



### THE ADICTS

record label. They are a three-piece group that has more talent than your local philharmonic. I have been lucky enough to have had the chance to view them a handful of times—but nothing could have prepared me for what I was about to witness on this fine evening. Bang Sugar Bang are just a great rock band. In this day and age, that sounds a little clichéd, so I will break it down for you. Their stage show is complete attitude, and attitude + energy = punk. This was the first time I have seen BSB play a big stage. They have convinced this reporter that they play for the fans/music and not for their egos. You can't fake the smiles the three kids have when they hit that first note. After that first chord is smacked, you get some plain ol'

funtastic tuneage for your dome. Every song that BSB have could easily be played on your local radio station. Nothing crude or rude and easily sing-alongable. It is definitely rare to come across a band as true and good as they are. Support the Detroit Red Wings and find a way to pick up the new BSB album, THWAK THWAK GO CRAZY. You will be happy you did.

The Adicts have been playing music together for more than a few fortnights; it has been a couple of decades now. Their set starts with a little movie consisting of the A CLOCKWORK ORANGE guy thrown up on a white screen. The crowd starts to cheer, which turns into pure chaos as all but one of the bandmembers take the stage. You would expect a band of this caliber to start with a BOOM, but that's not their style. You get a solo violin playing something like Beethoven, which only makes the folks watching go more crazy. They are the true fans who know that this is how The Adicts start all of their shows. Soft and sweet turns into over an hour-and-a-half of straight-up, in-your-face, old-school

## THE ADICTS



punk. When you can't take it anymore, the famed leader of the group, Monkey, comes out in his full regalia: a full makeup job, his tight-as-fuck black sequined jacket and slacks. He leads the group with a song that started it all, "Steamroller", while shooting confetti all over us. Nothing can be better in life than a show by The Adicts. Playing non-stop for the next hour can keep someone usually on life support going without it for a day or two. My only complaint is that the volume levels in the back sucked. That didn't make too much of a difference to me, since I knew every word, but to the less fortunate it could have been a bitch.

Other than that, the show was absolutely perfect. Their stage show can only be compared to...hmmmm...let's say, Neil Diamond on crack. They only played one encore song (which lasted 15 minutes), but that was good enough for me. This was a great night for me and

for music.

(Last paragraph deleted due to gibberish.)

## THE NETWORK GREEN DAY

October 11, 2005 @ the Wiltern LG,

(Los Angeles, CA)

Text by Todd Markel

Photos from The Idiot Club

I had just seen Green Day three days previously at the Home Depot Center in Carson, and here I was anxiously waiting in line to see them once again, this time for a "secret" show at the Wiltern that was being broadcast to a worldwide audience on the Internet by AOL MUSIC. I felt extremely lucky to score these tickets, as the show sold out in seconds and scalpers were getting up to \$250 a ticket on eBay. Doors were scheduled to open at 6:30 p.m., but it was almost 7:45 before the line started to move. A number of devoted fans had been in line since noon to ensure they got access to the exclusive pit area, which was limited to the first 150 people on the floor.

The opening act for this special show was a band called The Network, which knowledgeable Green Day fans know is actually comprised of the members of Green Day plus two keyboard players. All the band members are incognito, their faces obscured by ski masks, bandages, or "lucha libre"-type wrestling masks. Fink—presumed to be Billie Joe—is the leader of the group. The bass player's name is Van Gough, and he does most of their singing (and resembles Mike Dirnt). They rarely play live shows and profess a deep hatred for Green Day. Their sound is retro synth-pop, reminding me a lot of Devo and current bands like The Epoxies and The Phenomenauts. They have a new-wave, space-age sound with a blazing light show that features an inflatable spaceship with blinking lights hovering over the stage. The Network has one studio CD out on Adeline Records called MONEY, MONEY 2020, and they played most of the songs on the

album. They kicked off with "Transistors Gone Wild", then went right into a catchy little number called "Joe Robot". A crowd-favorite was "Spike", with its telephone-call intro and rambling lyrics. They finished their energetic, exciting set with a song called "X-Ray Hamburger"...but the best was yet to come.

The Webcast was supposed to start at 9 p.m. sharp, but it was almost 9:30 by the time the lights went down and the theme to 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY came on. To thunderous applause, Billie Joe, Mike, and Tre make their way on stage and immediately bust into the song "American Idiot", and the crowd goes wild. Billie states that he needs about a hundred more people to come down into the pit and convinces security that it's okay to let them come down. Next up is the nine-minute epic "Jesus of Suburbia", with its five separate segments. It's almost a rock opera unto itself. It finishes with a blast of amazing pyrotechnics. "This song is a big 'fuck you' to George W. Bush" is how Billie introduced "Holiday", which begins with more explosions. He went on to say, "This song can't be anti-American—it's anti-war!" At one point, Billie Joe calls for "lights out" and shined a spotlight through a cloud of smoke into the audience, to great effect. He then recited the "Pledge of Allegiance" before finishing the song. After the big sing-along "Boulevard of Broken Dreams", Billie announced, "If you haven't figured it out yet, we're playing AMERICAN IDIOT from front-to-back," which was greeted with large cheers from the crowd. "This song is basically about a little walk in New York City" was how "Are We the Waiting" was introduced. As they started "Give Me Novocaine", Billie Joe noted that his wife Adrienne had urged him to include this song on the record. Song after song was met with a fanatical response from the crowd, who show their love by singing

## GREEN DAY



every word. "Letterbomb" started with Billie singing a cappella, and the crowd immediately joined in: "Nobody likes you / Everyone left you / They're all out without you / Having fun." Billie announced that "Homecoming" was their last song, and he then went on to say that, "This whole experience for the last year-and-a-half has been the best time of my life. Thank you." "Homecoming" is another five-part masterpiece, with traversing melodies, storylines, and genres. Mike has his own part to sing—"Nobody likes you"—and Tre sang "Rock and Roll Girlfriend" while canons shot tons of red and white confetti into the audience. They leave the stage, but it's obvious there is at least one more song coming. They are soon back onstage to play the final song of AMERICAN IDIOT, the haunting "Whatsername", which is almost an epilogue to the album. Without missing a beat, Tre starts the familiar drumbeat to "Longview", which is followed by Mike's famous bass line—and pandemonium breaks loose. They followed that with an extended version of "Minority" from 2000's WARNING CD. With the smell of black powder still thick in the air and a tear in my eye, I realize that I had just witnessed a great show. Screw any discussions of Green Day's punkness or lack thereof; they are far beyond that. AMERICAN IDIOT puts them in another league. One can only wonder: How in the hell are they going to follow it up?

## DARKBUSTER LOST CITY ANGELS GANG GREEN DROPKICK MURPHYS

October 13, 2005 @ the House of Blues (Hollywood, CA)  
Text and photos by Audiophile

Oops, I missed Darkbuster. I was REALLY looking forward to them, too. My friend has seen them a few times and has told me they're a great band to see live. Be sure to check out Darkbuster on-line at [WWW.Darkbuster.Net](http://WWW.Darkbuster.Net).

After a pause long enough to fool me into thinking I didn't miss Darkbuster, Lost City

### DROPKICK MURPHYS



DROPKICK MURPHYS

their political anthem, "Liberation"; and "Pretty War", a very great song to mosh to. Singer Ronnie took a small pause during their set to give shout-outs to all the other bands on this Boston Invasion Tour. And yes, it really was a Boston invasion. I've never heard so many sexy Boston accents onstage at once in my life. It was a very good thing. Be sure to give these guys—one of my top-five favorite bands I discovered this year—a listen at [WWW.Lostcityangels.Com](http://WWW.Lostcityangels.Com) and look for when they'll be in your city. Whatever it costs, it's worth it.

To be honest, before this show, I'd never heard of Gang Green (not the band, anyway). Don't get angry, Boston natives—I'm a Californian. I don't KNOW Boston hardcore. I'm not even a real big fan of hardcore. But I did like these guys, so don't hate me. Something did seem

Dropkick Murphys (and he's actually NOT the drummer in DKM, either). After the show, I did a bit of research for the band and was NOT surprised to see Gang Green is best-known as a warp-speed, three-chord, beer-loving band. That pretty much sums them up. That might sound simplistic to you, but remember, these guys are a CLASSIC; they came BEFORE everything else that sounds just like everything I described. Therefore, they are better. Right? Right.

I'll tell you one thing about DKM: they sure know how to fill up a stage. I'd never seen a stage so full before—and these amazing boys still found room to run around and have fun while putting on a great show. They were loud, they were from Boston, and one dude was wearing a kilt and playing the bagpipes. What else do you need to make a show great? But,

being the wonderful band they are, they went above and beyond. Lead singer Al Barr jumped down onto a specially-placed box and sang into the audience for what seemed to be every other song, while bass player/vocalist Ken Casey ran from mic to mic on stage, wherever his heart would lead him. They played a few songs off of their newest

### LOST CITY ANGELS



Angels took the stage. LCA rocked my world. This is only my second time seeing them live, but that's enough to come to the realization that these guys are going to be remembered as one kick-ass punk band. They played tunes such as their hauntingly beautiful "Broken World";

about the band though: the singer was in his late 40s (I believe that's being generous, too), while the rest of the band were in their 30s, maybe. So I did a little sneaking and a little asking around up in the VIP section and found that the only original member of Gang Green there that night was the singer Chris Doherty—the rest were Dropkick Murphys' crew (with the exception of the drummer, who was with

album, *THE WARRIOR'S CODE*, and a few of the classics. The only thing I didn't hear was "Walk Away"...but honestly, toward the end, I REALLY had to go to the bathroom, so it's possible I missed it. Be sure to check out Dropkick Murphys at [WWW.Dropkickmurphys.Com](http://WWW.Dropkickmurphys.Com), and see them sometime on this Boston Invasion Tour, 'cause you'll hate yourself if you miss any of these great bands when they're in your area.

## SELECT MEDIA FESTIVAL: THE MATHEMATICIANS

October 22, 2005 @ Texas Ballroom (Chicago, IL)  
By J. Wallace

Robot punk! The Mathematicians invaded Chicago's Texas Ballroom during the opening weekend of the month-long Select Media Festival, complete with nerd glasses, lab coats, and volumes almost at the pain threshold. Once the opening strains of "Binary Girl" began, it was clear this ain't your typical NY art-attack group. For a start, in this hyperactive trio there's only a bass guitar, computer gear, keyboards, and a drum kit (expertly battered nearly to death by Albert Gorithm). Yes, the whole band has math gimmick names: Pete Pythagoras on bass and vocals, and Dewi Decimal screaming, rapping, and handling keyboard duties). On stage it looks like too much to keep track of, but somehow the band pulls it off. And this bunch likes to whip out a rhyme or six. Sample lyric from the album *LEVEL ONE*: "It's 4 then 4 on the XY axis / Free your mind and wipe your eyeglasses." The group gets crazy with the algebra, alright. Standouts from their set included "Weapons of Mass Instruction" and "Child of Satan". The Mathematicians appeared completely tireless, going from one high-energy electro-assault to the next with hardly a breather in between. The equation also includes the right balance of high-end synth noises and thick, rock-bottom bass, giving the group a full sound—far better than if they had relied on a metallic guitar sound to fill up sonic space. Because of this, the band is louder than god but easier on the ears. Who needs a six-string when you have a stage full of circuitry? By the time "Malfunction", "Harpsicode", and "LCD" were over, the band had gotten as much mileage as possible from the math-geek gimmick; but the performances change texture so much that it's not really a one-note joke. This is a group that could easily wear out their welcome with high-concept obsessiveness. Knowing that is half the battle—and The Mathematicians won it fair and square at the Texas Ballroom.

## VICTORY SEASON ORANGE AMERICAN EYES HOME GROWN

October 27, 2005 @ the Key Club  
(Hollywood, CA)  
Photos and text by Todd Markel

Over the years, there has been one Orange County band that has consistently been there with great albums and extraordinary stage shows. While overcoming many obstacles and personal changes, for many Home Grown has come to typify the Orange County sound. This past year has seen yet another challenge for this band, with the departure of founding member Adam Lohrbach, who, as one of the principal singer/songwriters, was responsible for a number of their most popular songs.

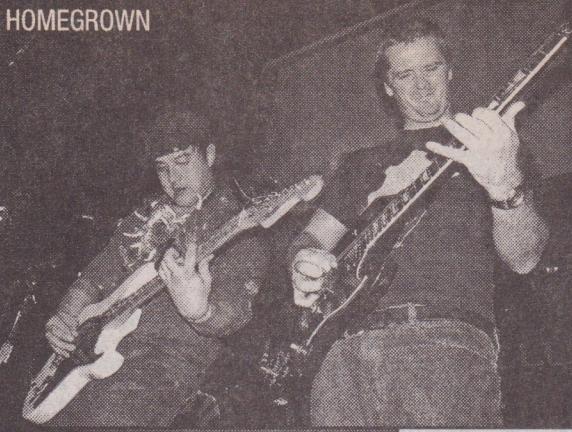
As I walked in to the club I was surprised to see Victory Season on stage. I have seen them once before and recalled how much I enjoyed their show. Their singer is Stephanie Esparza, a petite woman with a big and powerful voice that really shines through in their songs. They have a polished sound that might seem a little out of place playing with tonight's punk bands. From Anaheim, this talented power-pop band could easily give the Ashleys and Lindsays a run for their money. The song "Venice" shows just how versatile Stephanie's voice is, ranging from soft and sweet to sultry and rocking. They closed their set with their best song, the country-rock-sounding "Pills" with its hook of "Take one to remember / Take one to forget it all". Look for their first CD, VICTORY SEASON, to be released on November 10th.

### AMERICAN EYES



their name. Don't let the wacky punk outfits fool you: they play authentic old-school Brit-punk (think Buzzcocks meet The Matches). It's no wonder Tim Armstrong liked them enough to sign them to his Hellcat Records label and release their debut CD,

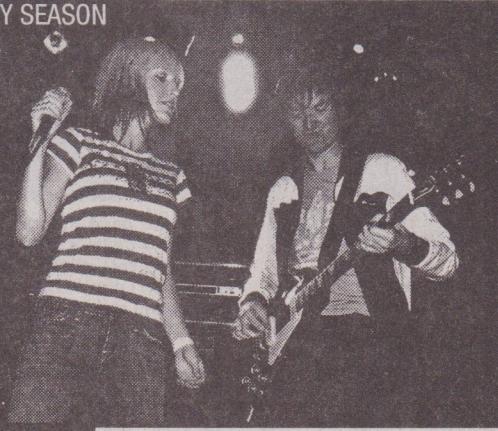
### HOME GROWN



### HOME GROWN



### VICTORY SEASON



### ORANGE



**WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF ORANGE.** Their 17-year-old frontman Joe Dexter Denman, who was decked out in a Union Jack suit, mohawk, nerd glasses, and a gutter-punk snarl, puts on quite the show. A highlight of their set was the ultra catchy tune "Hollywood" and its tale of living in the hills of Hollywood. With a number of local fans cheering them on, they finished up with "No Rest for the Weekend".

One of the latest groups to join the SideOneDummy roster is American Eyes. Hailing from Agoura Hills, these longtime friends describe their sound as being neo-goth dance-punk. Lead singer David Henry has a gothic AFI sort of look, a great voice, and a radio-friendly sound. They have been building a reputation for wild and exciting live shows. Check out the poppy "Carry on for Keepsake" or the sing-along anthem "Radio". Their latest CD is NEVER TRUST ANYTHING THAT BLEEDS, and it features a number of rocking songs that will keep you pumping your fist in the air. Catch them at Bloc Jam 4 in Lancaster on November 19th with Eudora, National Product, and many more. For more info: [www.blockalternatives.com/BMX/BLOCKjam4.html](http://www.blockalternatives.com/BMX/BLOCKjam4.html).

Tonight was Johnee Tran's 30th birthday, and it was evident that he had been partying for most of the night. By the time he got on stage, he was feeling no pain. He announced that he had just thrown up backstage and that if any girls wanted to make out with him, his breath was kickin'. No takers. They surprised a number of people (including myself) by kicking the show off with "Give It Up" from 2002's KINGS OF POP CD. This is an Adam Lohrbach song, so I wrongly assumed they wouldn't be playing it. Johnee then went right into one of his signature songs from ACT YOUR AGE, "Bad News Blair". Some of his cousins came on stage with a small birthday cake, and we all sang "Happy Birthday to You". He blew out the candles, and they smeared the cake all over his face. Johnee took this with good humor, but the cake made the guitar sticky

and a little hard to play. Despite my pleas for them to play "Face in the Crowd" from 1995's THAT'S BUSINESS, they played the equally good "Impotency" from the same album. Johnee once again showed that he had no fear and played another Lohrbach song, "Tomorrow". "Keep Your Distance" (from last year's EP) sounded great, as did both "Sixteen" and "Barbie Girl" from 1999's PHONE HOME EP. Then they played "You're Not Alone", during which Johnee had a lot trouble hitting the right notes. He was all over the place and visibly upset. Guitarist Dan Hammond called for some emergency Bud Lights to be delivered to the stage, stat. After a round of shots of Jack Daniels, they started "Kiss Me, Diss Me" but stopped mid-song to bring a fan named Tyler on stage to play guitar for their headbanging ode to the mullet, "SFLB" ("Short in the front / Long in the back"). They then came back to "Kiss Me, Diss Me" for a big finish.

Tonight's show had the feel of a small intimate gathering of family, friends, and fans who were here to wish Johnee a happy birthday and all the best.

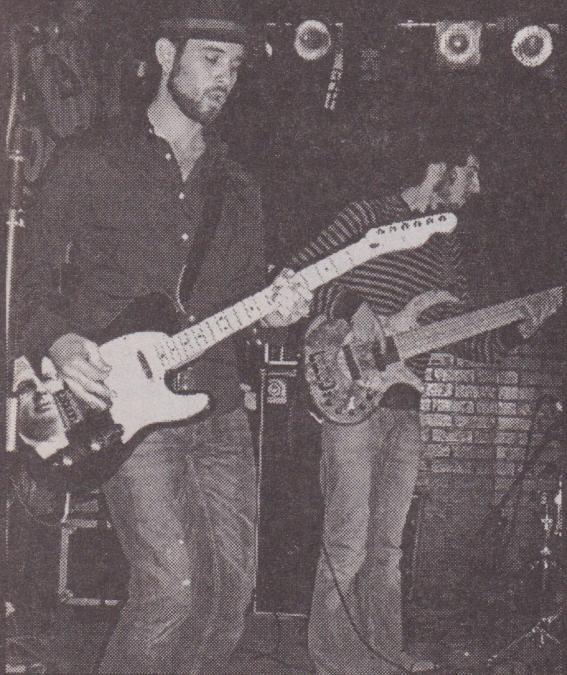
**PAPER MODELS**  
**DUSTY RHODES AND THE RIVER BAND**  
**HOUSE OF FOOLS**  
**STEEL TRAIN**

November 4, 2005 @ Chain Reaction (Anaheim, CA)  
Text and Photos by: Audiophile

Paper Models didn't really seem to fit in with the bill tonight. They weren't bad—they just seemed rather mellow in comparison to the rest of the bands. They had some decent tunes (none of which I was able to catch the name of), and they drew a decent-sized crowd. If they're ever playing in your area, be sure to check them out; and look them up online at [WWW.Papermodelsmusic.Com](http://WWW.Papermodelsmusic.Com).

Paper Models sure are tall. Dusty Rhodes and the River Band had to drop the mics about a foot while setting up. I found that very amusing. Dusty Rhodes and the River Band are an amazing thing to witness live. How many of you have seen a synth, accordion, and a violin all on the same stage? It's not just the arrangement of this band that makes them astonishing, it's also their songwriting skills (both the music and the lyrics). The sound is simple and very beautiful at times, but it can become so overwhelming and intense that it just simply amazes you. Check them out at [WWW.Dusty-Rhodes.Net](http://WWW.Dusty-Rhodes.Net).

**STEEL TRAIN**



STEEL TRAIN

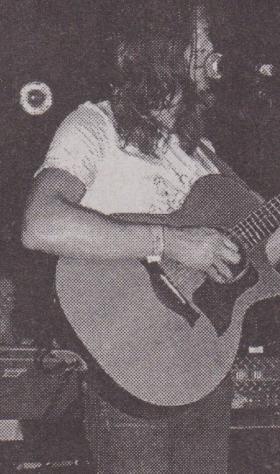
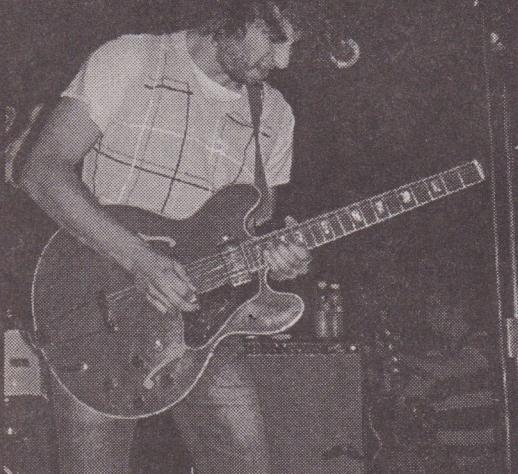
House of Fools had way too many guitar pedals. I don't know what you could possibly DO with so many. I swear, one of the guitar players alone had 20. The bass player had an insane amount, too. (I didn't know they made so many pedals for the bass.) Anyway, this band's intensity and combination of completely different sounds caught me off guard. They went straight from an intensely progressive-rock style into a more poppy, indie, bouncy, hook-laden style from chorus to verse or vice versa (depending on the song). And their breakdowns were complex and captivating, to say the least. Hear it for yourself at [WWW.Myspace.Com/Houseoffools](http://WWW.Myspace.Com/Houseoffools).

This was my first time seeing Steel Train live, and I must say that they are not something I'd normally expect from Drive-Thru. This jam/indie/progressive band soared well above my expectations. They are one INTENSIVE jam band, putting forth great amounts of passion and energy that passed into the crowd and got the whole venue dancing. Lead guitarist/backup singer Matthew Goldman (I believe) went off on his guitar, giving a Hendrix-esque performance (minus the whole playing-with-his-teeth and setting-his-guitar-on-fire thing). Another thing that surprised me was the lack of vocals. There were some, but it was mainly about the instrumentation—which was very enjoyable. I'd much rather hear a guitar solo than "We're going downtown" or whatever horrid songs are being played on the radio today. Be sure to visit Steel Train online at [WWW.Steeltrainrock.Com](http://WWW.Steeltrainrock.Com).

**DUSTY RHODES AND  
THE RIVER BAND**



HOUSE OF FOOLS



DUSTY RHODES AND THE RIVER BAND

**THE NIPPLES  
GRAVE FOR THE FIREFLIES  
DEADBEAT SINATRA  
MOTHER NATURES REVENGE  
BULLET TREATMENT  
WALK PROUD**

November 5, 2005 @ the Anarchy Library (Downey, CA)  
Text and photos by Audiophile

It's been YEARS since I've heard anything about, by, or related to The Nipples. Then, the other night on Myspace, Bullet Treatment sends me an invite to a show in which they are playing. How the hell could I say no? When I was a kid in high school, I happened to pick up a compilation CD with the song "We Love Sluts" and enjoyed it very much. I was fortunate enough to get to hear them play that song live, which surprised me greatly, since that song is about six years old now. I guess they stick with the classics. They also played some newer songs, such as "Cock Fest" and quiet possibly my favorite (if only for the name), "Nippleitis". It's safe to say that everyone thoroughly enjoyed The Nipples this night, except possibly the person who shouted, "You suck! Get off the stage"—to which the singer replied, "Yo momma sucks!" He told him! Later on in the evening I was able to talk to bass player Whitey (at least that's what he told me his name is), who commented that he believes The Nipples will probably never be signed to a label—and that it doesn't really matter to any of them. They're just in it for the fun. That's what I think makes them a great band. Be sure to check them out at [WWW.TheNipples.Com](http://WWW.TheNipples.Com).

Grave for the Fireflies was another kick-ass band that I was fortunate enough to watch grace the stage tonight. These boys (and the one girl who kinda hid in the back and didn't look at the crowd) went straight to business, blasting out trash-punk song after song, barely stopping to speak in-between. They didn't even say who they were, let alone the name of any of their songs. Someone (it could have been the same guy who said that The Nipples sucked) shouted to guitarist Richey, "I want to have your baby...so I can eat it!" which brought about nothing but smiles from Richey. The crowd at the bar seemed to be a lot of longtime friends and fans of the bands, which gave this whole night the feel of fun. For more fun, check out Grave for the Fireflies online at [WWW.Graveforthefireflies.Com](http://WWW.Graveforthefireflies.Com).

Oh yes, another wannabe Social Distortion band. Deadbeat Sinatra has the potential to be something more than what they currently choose to be. I liked a lot of their songs (like "Oh No Baby" and "Bleeding Heart"), and they did do a great cover of a Social Distortion song—but come on! Be a little more original. From the second they took the stage, I couldn't get images of Mike Ness out of my head. All the way-too-made-up rockabilly girls

pushed their way to the front of the stage during their set. I happened to lay eyes upon the most frighteningly vamped-out woman I have ever seen. They called her Precious, and she frightens me. You can listen and judge Deadbeat Sinatra for yourself at [WWW.Deadbeatsinatra.Com](http://WWW.Deadbeatsinatra.Com).

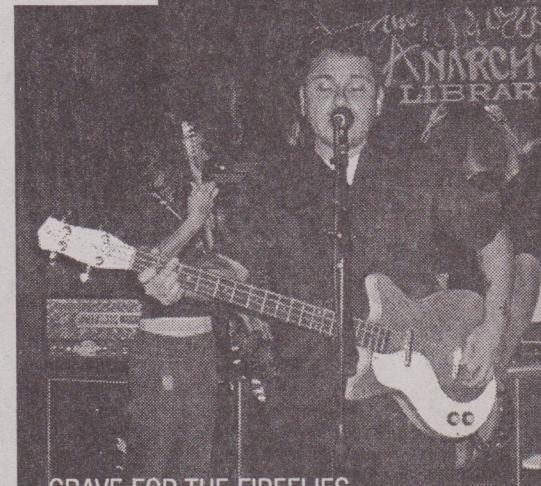
I enjoyed Mother Natures Revenge more than I should have, but I couldn't help it: they were just insanely amazing. The whole room was screaming for them and cheering them on while they tore apart the stage with their brand of thrash-core punk rock. A few people in the crowd were screaming for the band to play "Fireball", which the band did. Then the crowd screamed "Fireball again!" and the band actually consented. That's how you know a band loves its fans: by the band's willingness to do what the drunken crowd screams. Other songs they played included "Dancing in the Trash" and "Off to the Glue Factory". Someone said something about the singer LEAVING for Japan in a few days, but no one said whether he'd be returning or not. I hope he doesn't leave to never come back. I just discovered Mother Natures Revenge, and they are way too killer to stop now. I look forward to checking them out in the future—as should you—at [WWW.Mother-Natures-Revenge.Com](http://WWW.Mother-Natures-Revenge.Com).

I'm very sorry and disappointed in myself when I say that I MISSED Bullet Treatment and Walk Proud, two very kick-ass punk bands. Bullet Treatment have been around for quite a while, starting out as a cover band, then naming itself after the two songs they first covered: Misfits' "Bullet" and The Ramones' "Gimme Gimme Shock Treatment". Sadly, Bullet Treatment rarely play these days (this was just their second show of 2005). Be sure to check them out at [WWW.Bullettreatment.Com](http://WWW.Bullettreatment.Com). Walk Proud are an older punk band, reminiscent of such acts as G.B.H., Circle Jerks, Bad Religion, and Minor Threat.

Their first album was released in 1988, three years after the band first formed in 1985. Don't dis them because they're older—they're still a great act. Be sure to check them out at [WWW.Myspace.Com/Walkproud](http://WWW.Myspace.Com/Walkproud).



**MOTHER NATURES REVENGE**



**GRAVE FOR THE FIREFLIES**

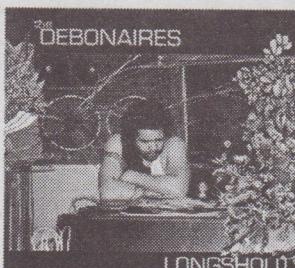




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7 SHOT SCREAMERS  
KEEP THE FLAME ALIVE  
HAUNTED TOWN RECORDS

Parents everywhere can rejoice! Your kids have found your old records and fallen in love with the rockabilly genre. So now, instead of bugging your parents with music that according to them is "way too loud." Throw this CD into your CD player and watch the smiles light up on their faces. Not really. Although this band may have been influenced by a lot of 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80s rock, they're still punk-rock down to the very last bit of their core. Mike Leahy's vocals and Chris Powers Jr.'s upright bass might make you feel like you're listening to an Elvis song, but this band's lyrics are just way too anti-establishment to truly fit in to that genre. It is a nice blend though and definitely worth checking out. This band spent almost five years working to get this CD released, so at least do them that small favor. -Tijana



AGAINST ME!  
SEARCHING FOR A FORMER CLARITY  
FAT WRECK CHORDS

The word "condoleezza" is Italian for a sweet, musical tone. It rolls off the tongue with such harmony that it's a shame that until now no American musician has put the word into a song. Leave it to Florida's Against Me! and their newest country-punk-whatever masterpiece, SEARCHING FOR A FORMER CLARITY, to do not only the word, but our beloved secretary of state and her cronies the justice they deserve. More clean cut and straightforward than previous outings, Against Me! has matured a lot in the last three years—but this record sacrifices none in political wit and the genre-breaking socially-conscious anthems that made them a Fat Wreck staple. These guys get better with every record. SEARCHING FOR A FORMER CLARITY is no exception. -Brandon Russell



ANTHRAX  
ALIVE 2  
SANCTUARY

Anthrax gets nostalgic and becomes a reunion act? Sadly, that's how these NYC pioneers of metal, after putting out unquestionably their best work to date with WE'VE COME FOR YOU ALL, have spent much of 2005. With all the original (well, the best-known ones, anyhow) members in tow, Anthrax commemorates this reconvening with the 12-track ALIVE 2. Of course it sounds great, but is it a step in the right direction to reinstitute a lineup from 20 years ago and give it another go-round? That's really up to the fans; but if you have any doubt about how the band sounds, fear not: they still rip with the vigor and virtue that you'd expect from this incendiary act. Let's just hope they get it out of their system and continue breaking new ground—sans the KISS-esque chicanery. [www.sanctuaryrecordsgroup.com](http://www.sanctuaryrecordsgroup.com) -Mike SOS



ANTHRAX  
ANTHROLOGY: NO HIT WONDERS (1985-1991)  
ISLAND

Cashing in on reunion-mania, the boys in Anthrax have chronicled their most popular time with this two-disc set containing all the best from 1985-1991 (a.k.a. the Belladonna era). Undoubtedly put out to coincide with the recent reuniting of the classic "Thrax" lineup, if you own all of these tracks already, there's really no need to purchase this one. But if you are relatively unfamiliar with the groundbreaking metal act that not only spearheaded the rap-metal trend but also put out some mighty fine metal in the process, then this collection is a great place to start. Let's hope that the band decides to make a move out of this time machine in the very near future and continues to forge ahead and show the metal world how true crossover is done. [www.islandrecords.com](http://www.islandrecords.com) -Mike SOS



ASMODEUS  
DIABOLIQUE ROYALE  
HAIRBALL 8 RECORDS

The third full-length release from this Amsterdam-based psychobilly trio is a "hotrod to hell" formula with enough angst-ridden growling to aggravate a graveyard. On DIABOLIQUE ROYALE, the band blazes its way through several upbeat numbers (like "Heel on the Shovel"). Some tunes from the band's earlier career (like "King's Coffin", "Pushin' Up Daisies", and "Halfway to Hell") would make you think this band a one-trick pony. Sure, it helps to have the boys' bad-ass pompadours and enough dark attitude to spook a vampire, but these Dutchmen consistently play the biggest rockabilly festivals worldwide. If the guys weren't great, the band would still be playing gigs at hash bars and windmill raves. Check these scary greasers out. -Dug



BAD MOON MUSIC  
EMPIRE  
HAWTHORNE STREET RECORDS

This debut six-song EP from ex-members of Chamberlain and Split Lip walks the fine line between melodic hardcore and sonic rock. The New York-based trio's aggressive-yet-accessible tunes echo with the influence of bands like Foo Fighters, Fugazi, and Pearl Jam. Vocalist/guitarist Adam Rubenstein is a dominant force in this enterprise as his gruff vocals and sizzling guitar riffs make up the backbone of this disc. One of the most interesting and catchiest tunes on the disc is the title track, which breaks with the sonic dissonance and actually becomes a bit of an epic saga about the fragility of urban life. There aren't any earth-shattering revelations on this disc, just a talented band writing and playing some quality rock. -Dug



BANANE METALIK  
SEX, BLOOD AND GORE 'N' ROLL  
KILLER-BANANAS

You've got to love a French band that starts out its album with a chainsaw slicing up young girls. This European hybrid copy of Gwar, Marilyn Manson, and Slipknot is an amusing send-up of everything we love in a horror movie. Though my French is rusty, it isn't hard to get a grip on this disc; the bloody knives, disfigured eyeballs, and rotting corpses are universal. These songs are actually pretty good, considering the carnage these comic butchers bring on. This would be the perfect disc for an eclectic Halloween bash or for a party full of sick zombies. You can't expect this disc to provide any melodic insights, but it does bring forth some pretty catchy—and pretty funny—old-school rock. Just don't expect any love songs. -Dug



BEECHER  
THIS ELEGY, HIS AUTOPSY  
EARACHE RECORDS

Beecher comes out trying to rip your head off in a fairly well put together manner. The first song has everything you'd want from a semi-complicated heavy and fast song that despite frequent repetition in the player, you aren't sick of listening to. This is an intriguing band that has a few tricks up its sleeve as far as various ways to break up a song and keep each one a little different and distinguished. This is another one of those bands that is NOT made in the studio, their live character and sound is as good or better than the studio version of themselves they present to an audience. -Thomas Murray



BIOLOGY  
MAKING MOVES  
VAGRANT

The brainchild of Francis Mark (vocalist/drummer of From Autumn to Ashes), Biology is an attempt at melding music and art once again, harkening back to the era of The Velvet Underground. Such ambition is always a breath of fresh air in the music industry and props must be given for his goals...; however, Biology is a complete failure. Rather than using his project to its fullest—as a tool for experimenting with music and ideas that are impossible for his other band—Mark basically creates another uninspiring pop/rock band. There are no moments musically that stick out to me. Guitars are extremely straightforward riffs, the drums are boring, and the bass is BASSically nonexistent. Vocally, we aren't given much to play around with, either. This is perhaps one of the saddest attempts at being artsy that I have ever heard. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



BITTER TONGUES  
CLOVIS  
UNITED EDGE RECORD

"United" and "edge" are my two favorite concepts in the scene, mostly because they are such amazingly good ideas in theory and completely dismal failures in practice. Unfortunately, CLOVIS inhabits the vast middle ground between amazing and dismal (which bounds most of hardcore). They have a clever bio, reference revered bands (e.g., Fugazi, Quicksand), and have perfected the middling mix of punk speak-singing, hardcore growling, and dreary instrumentals. Since the band pokes fun at being one of "roughly 8,392 other independent band[s]" from Austin, it appears that they are aware and embrace the middle ground of mediocrity. And that's cool, because there are thousands of fans more than willing to meet them there. -Erika Owens



BOUNCING SOULS  
LIVE AT THE GLASSHOUSE DVD  
KUNG-FU FILMS

How could anything with, by, or even ABOUT the Bouncing Souls be anything but amazing? It's very simple, it can't be, and therefore, this is one marvelous DVD. LIVE AT THE GLASSHOUSE is filled with some amazing footage from The Glasshouse, but it doesn't only contain a great stage show (like the lead singer out amongst the crowd during "Hopeless Romantic" laughing and having a good old time), but it also has some great bonus features such as extra live footage of the band rehearsing someplace in L.A. and a trailer of another DVD of theirs you might have heard about, it only won an award; DO YOU REMEMBER? Anyway, if you like, love, or just want to check out the Bouncing Souls, you certainly can't go wrong with this. -Audiophile



BUCKET FULL OF TEETH  
IV  
LEVEL PLANE RECORDS

Bucket Full of Teeth has produced a seamless disc that flows through disturbing chaos to tranced-out soundscapes to total freak-out rock to screaming hardcore. They create music that mimics life itself. If what's going on in a given moment while listening to IV disturbs you, just wait, as it changes (and naturally). There are rumors that this is the last Bucket Full of Teeth disc. Regardless, if you dig anything from Blood Brothers to Lightning Bolt, IV is for you.

-H. Barry Zimmerman



CALVIN JOHNSON  
BEFORE THE DREAM FADED  
K RECORDS

Having done time with Beat Happening (one of Washington State's most acclaimed indie bands), Calvin Johnson knows better than to put out something that's sub-par. BEFORE THE DREAM FADED is Johnson's second solo effort, and, as always, he's avoiding convention. The 10 tracks are filled with a slew of guest musicians, including Warren Lee and Devin Welch of The Chromatics, Phil Elverum from Mt. Eerie, and Y.A.C.H.T. member Jona Bechtolt, just to name a few. The record ranges from minimal instrumentation (such as on opener "When Hearts Turn Blue" and "Red Wing Black") to the cacophony of an entire band (as heard on "Rabbit Blood"). Interesting stuff... but I won't lie and say it's the most accessible record I've heard this year. Johnson's vocals are definitely an acquired taste, somewhere between those of Tom Waits and Nick Cave; but BEFORE THE DREAM FADED proves to be a solid release. -David Barker



CATS AND JAMMERS  
PROPOSE TOAST  
SCOTCH HELL RECORDS

With track titles like "Get Your Ya-Ya's Out", "Spitball", "People Are Stupid", and "Jesus Was a Jew", it's no surprise that Cats and Jammers are a fun-loving band with a straightforward pop delivery, old-school punk riffs, and drums reminiscent of The Ramones, and influences from 1950s pop songs. The vocals are very immature and many times off key. This all adds up to a nerdy punk aspect that is searching to be as tight and special as the nerd-rock gods, They Might Be Giants. Unfortunately, other than their humor, I ain't getting shit else. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



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CONCOMBRE ZOMBI  
DAYLIGHT COMES  
HAIRBALL 8 RECORDS

You are a back-seat passenger riding through Texas. The acid is starting to take over. As you cross into Mexico, the sun is disappearing. You notice that the car is being driven by wild-eyed, criminal strangers looking for trouble. Concombre Zombi's DAYLIGHT COMES would be the perfect disc to be playing. It's a perfect psychobilly disc, pure and cohesive. Some of the best of the best are "Honeymoon in Hell", "Evil Machine", and "The Ripper". Concombre Zombi is waiting for you to get in the back seat. Do it. -H. Barry Zimmerman



DAIKAIJU  
DAIKAIJU  
REPTILE RECORDS

Daikaiju is a surf rock band from Huntsville, AL, yet many of its song names sound like Japanese Godzilla movie titles. Daikaiju is the Japanese word for "giant monster," so I'm sure you can guess what the title "Daikaiju Diel" means. Guitar-centric surf-rock music is the overall aural theme here, but this four-piece also embellishes this multiple instances. "Farewell to Monster Island", for example, begins with mid-tempo reggae; "Incognito" is spiced with rockabilly swing; and "The Daikaiju" has an Italian flavor to it. Even if you don't like surf music, this CD is almost worth it for its song titles alone. It's hard not to giggle at tracks called such things as "Attack of the Crab Women" and "The Trouble with Those Mothra Girls". Additionally, band member pseudonyms are also a hoot, (e.g., guitarist Secret Asian Man). -Dan MacIntosh



DEMANDER  
DEMANDER  
TRIPPLICATE RECORDS

Already likened to The Breeders by way of tracks written around strong, thudding bass lines while post-punk guitar attitudes waltz around, Demander have a strong, straightforward, tight pop sensibility with a creative bent. There are some fun hooks—specifically, when guitar and bass take over (e.g., "Wicked World") and utilize their strong sense of melody and playful style. Vocally, though, there seems to be a lack of energy or emotion mirroring—so much so that at times you wish you could yank the female vocalist and make her surprise you with a yell here or there. I want to hear some Frank Black growls or some Crass I-don't-give-a-fucks. Without them, the energy of the music seems to remain sheer unactualized potential. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



DIE YOUNG  
MARS RETURNS  
DIYFS

I haven't experienced a more demented and dogmatic approach to music since Cannibal Corpse. When music this bad comes along, it really makes one wonder what possibly could have happened to the band that would make them hate life so much. Judging from the lyrics, a few therapy sessions might be in order for these guys to get over their seriously deep-rooted anti-church issues. With a drawing of a priest holding a gun to someone whose head is buried in holy water and with lyrics like, "The benevolent upright Father is just a filthy priest in heat," it doesn't exactly make you want to rock out in joyous unison. They've got the DIY ethic, with their photocopied lyric sheet/poster and cheaply-produced album, but the talent side of things could use a serious rebirth. -Sarah Conway



DIMBULB  
TRIP HAMMERS  
ANTI-MUSIC RECORDS

What we have here is a posthumous release by a Midwest band that combines the ferocious guitar, rock-out tendencies of old-school doomers like Sabbath with a penchant towards raunchy psychedelia and I-don't-give-a-fuck grunge attitude. The drums are strong and dark, the guitar riffs are dirty and ear-splitting, and the vocals are deep and pissed-off (varying from nearly hardcore aggression down to playful name-calling). Nowhere, though, does TRIP HAMMERS offer us any real surprises. The album is entirely "what you see is what you get"—and that is straightforward, aggressive tracks with largely repetitive rhythms and beats, making for a somewhat boring set of tracks. Each instrument plays its role quietly, never once having the spotlight shine. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



DRAMARAMA  
EVERYBODY DIES  
33RD STREET RECORDS

Founded in 1983 by John Easdale, Dramarama achieved mainstream radio popularity with its mega hit, "Anything, Anything (I'll Give You)", which was released in 1985 and cited by KROQ as its most requested song in the station's history. Now three of the original members have reunited and released the group's first album in 11 years, and it's well worth the wait. The 11-track CD features songs with thoughtful, moving lyrics, really tight, driving beats, and taut guitar work which is at times sizzling and at others lyrical in its simplicity. My personal favorite, "Physical Poetry (A-B-C-D-1-2-3)" features swirling psychedelic guitars and an infectious chorus and sounds like it could have been a major hit from 1966 or '67. I'm so glad these guys are back! -tekolote



DRAUGAR  
WEATHERING THE CURSE  
MORIBUND

Is Draugar a cross between Dracula and a jaguar? By the bleak yet muscular sound of WEATHERING THE CURSE, the answer just might point to yes, as this corpse-painted individual's eight-track interpretation of black metal has all of the malevolent elements in place to convincingly summon the evil. Layered guitars, pushed-back vocals, and a plethora of doom-laden melodies advance this disc to the top of the "don't touch if you're feeling on the brink" list, as the feelings of despair and impending doom are hard to shake after a sample of "Sold/ Tortured Old Soul" or "I Come as a Curse". www.moribundcult.com -Mike SOS



DRAWN AND QUARTERED  
RETURN OF THE BLACK DEATH  
MORBUND

Gargling vocals and blast beats aplenty are staples of Seattle's Drawn and Quartered's nine-track assault of your headspace, as this bloodfeast is as nasty as death metal gets. Brimming with blistering guitar work and subliminal melodies underneath the maelstrom of metal, tracks like "A Forest of Gore" meshes the wares of Cannibal Corpse and Nile so well that you might think the two bands had joined forces. The best attribute these merchants of the macabre have is that they know how to groove as well as they grind, keeping the mood foreboding enough to properly build up cranium-cracking crescendos on tracks like "As Fools Fall" so that you will be begging for mercy. Horns up—this one rocks. [www.morbundrecords.com](http://www.morbundrecords.com) -Mike SOS



FEAR MY THOUGHTS  
HELL SWEET HELL  
LIFEFORCE

German metalcore mongers Fear My Thoughts get all Swedish on y'all with a 12-track homage to At the Gates. On HELL SWEET HELL, this quintet pull all of the aforementioned tricks out of the bag for maximum headbanging, complete with ripping twin guitars, death-rock vocals, and the kind of intricate compositions bands like Children of Bodom and Soilwork are known for. Using the synths for added darkness, this crushing clan may not be the most original act on the block, but Fear My Thoughts pull off the visceral viciousness rather well. [www.lifeforcerecords.com](http://www.lifeforcerecords.com) -Mike SOS



FEDERATION X  
RALLY DAY  
ESTRUS RECORDS

Federation X's RALLY DAY does not sport a well-mastered sound; however, the melodies did bring about toe-tapping, which pleasantly surprised us. Their raw rock tunes could be a good opener for a Ramones/Rob Zombie headlining tour. With their ferocious vocals, Federation X is definitely worthy of radio play. The raw guitar, slight electronic vibe, and metal flair give this album spark and punch. -Aimee Curran



FIGURE OF MERIT  
VATIC  
EARACHE

File Minneapolis noiseniks Figure of Merit under the broad extreme metal genre, as this pummeling quartet let loose eight tracks brazen with massive amounts of dissonant feedback and hardcore attitude. Tracks like "Arrow to the Sun" lock the listener inside a hypnotic groove underneath a bed of cacophony, while "This Will Not Save You Anymore" combines nuances of doom metal and hardcore to come off like Mastodon meets Napalm. For an intriguing experience full of crashing instruments and jagged structures, Figure of Merit's brutal barrage succinctly delivers. [www.earache.com](http://www.earache.com) -Mike SOS



FISSION  
CRATER  
NAPALM

The two-man tandem known as Fission also play together in Vintersong, and they further an already solid bond on the 11-track CRATER. This disc teeters on the progressive side of the metal spectrum, yet never endorses the genre's excessiveness. Instead, the duo twist and turn thrash-metal riffs, electronic effects, and majestic metal passages where other bands noodle, creating a fresh sound whose unbound energy and unorthodox nature are greatly appreciated on tracks like "Catastrophe Consumer" and the Deep Purple-meets-Black Label Society (by way of Fates Warning) stomper "Mind Vortex". Progressive without pretense, CRATER is a disc for fans of bands like Grip Inc. and Dark Tranquility. [www.napalmrecords.com](http://www.napalmrecords.com) -Mike SOS



G-STRING  
BAD MOTHERFUCKERS  
HAIRBALL 8 RECORDS

If you think that France is full of pussy types, get a load of G-String. They tackle many styles, from psychobilly ("Rape Your Soul"), straight-down-your-throat punk ("Suicide Rock"), reggae-punk à la The Clash ("Down with the Cops"), and more. BAD MOTHERFUCKERS is an excellent, powerful, tough, and musical disc. This French trio could be good for your music collection, as well as your view on international relations. G-String is a super-talented band, and BAD MOTHERFUCKERS is the perfect title for this album. -H. Barry Zimmerman



GEMINI FIVE  
BABYLON ROCKETS  
DEADLINE

Technoified hair-metallers Gemini Five portray the trash-rock persona with ease on the quartet's 12-track offering, with throaty lead vocals à la Michael Monroe and semi-poppy hard-rock choruses on tracks like "Poison Envy" and their routine cover of Dead or Alive's "You Spin Me Round (Like a Record)" that belong in the time machine set back to Sunset Strip-era Los Angeles. This Swedish treat, heavy on the sizzle and short on the steak, try their damndest to help you rock out with your cock out, even when they try too hard to impersonate Bush on tracks like the inappropriately-titled "Hardcore". [www.cleorecs.com](http://www.cleorecs.com) -Mike SOS



GRIDLE  
TURNING VIOLET  
YOUR PERMANENT/TURKEY LEG RECORDS

Listening to TURNING VIOLET brings to mind all the amazing bands that Discord Records and D.C. have provided over the years. The vocals are superb, the songwriting is outstanding, and the musicianship follows suit. An undeniable pop element is at play, but the music transcends that of typical power-pop. Not to underestimate what the band's label is capable of delivering, but it's beyond me that this band isn't more well-known. TURNING VIOLET pulls off being groovy, interesting, and memorable by changing it up in each song without losing any focus. In the end, Gridle proves to be funky pop that isn't afraid to both experiment on some levels and turn entirely to cater to the average music fan. -David Barker



HORSE THE BAND  
THE MECHANICAL HAND  
KOCH RECORDS

If the Super Mario Brothers formed a metal band, it would probably sound something like this. Horse the Band brings us an interesting mix of hard rock laced with synthesized sounds that remind me of the endless hours spent playing Nintendo as a kid. The music is hard and fast, and the lyrics are loud but really hard to understand. This album also reminds me a bit of bands like System of a Down. At times, the keyboards border a Van Halen sound and provide a different sound not found in today's mainstream hard-rock scene. In the end, THE MECHANICAL HAND is a truly original album that isn't afraid to be different-sounding than the rest of the music out there today. It's odd sound kept me amused...but didn't blow me away. -Matt Edmund



HOTROD BOOGIE  
LAST TRAIN TO CHUCO  
BROKEN BONEZ RECORDS

This seven-song EP of original yet traditional rockabilly fare is a pleasant throwback to the days when nobody wore seatbelts and everybody smoked. With tunes like "Hot Rod Anthem" and "Go Cat Go", you might expect to hear the same riffs and rhythm that bands like Big Bad Voodoo Daddy and The Cherry Poppin' Daddies revived in the late '90s. You won't be disappointed. The band rips through these tunes with the gusto of a sailor on shoreleave. While nobody will toll this CD as cutting edge, nobody who likes swing or rockabilly will take it off the jukebox. I can think of a lot worse things to do on Saturday night than cruising around in my '55 Chevy with a belly full of beer and this disc on the radio. -Dug



JACK ENDINO  
PERMANENT FATAL ERROR  
WONDERTAKER RECORDS

What happened in the '90s, stays in the '90s, right? Apparently not. Jack Endino, known for producing and recording bands like Nirvana, Soundgarden, Mudhoney, Hot Hot Heat, and about 250 other bands takes a seat on both sides of the mixing board for his first solo album since '92, PERMANENT FATAL ERROR. One would think that having a roster of experience like that would mean that talent runs in Jack's veins; unfortunately, all it seems to mean is that Jack Endino knows how to produce a quality-sounding mediocre record that's semi-reminiscent of the early-'90s phase so endearingly referred to as "grunge." Sadly, what seems to be an honest effort at a decent album isn't much more innovative or creative than the band that always played in the high-school talent show back when flannel shirts and long hair could pass for talent. -Sarah Conway



JOHN DUFILHO  
SELF-TITLED  
GLURP RECORDS

This is the first solo effort for Dufilho. On this album, he takes on the task of writing, producing, and recording all the music on his own—not to mention playing all the instruments. The music is a mix of quirky mid-tempo power pop. It's clear to see that Dufilho has brought a lot of influences out on this disc, as he uses a lot of electronic loops and silly yet catchy lyrics. I loved the fact that one second you feel as though you are listening to a rough demo album and the next he hits you with a lush stereo soundscape. The one thing I took away from listening to this album is that there are still musicians out there who are talented enough to take their music and do what they wish with it. It's honest music that stays true to Dufilho's intentions as a musician. -Matt Edmund



JOHNNY SIZZLE  
METAMORPHESIZ  
CRUSTY RECORDS

This rock-star diva drag queen has made me remember why I hate listening to the radio. You'd never hear her/him on it. I love love LOVE this CD. Upbeat and acoustic songs force you to start dancing around. Crazy, fun lyrics force you to start smiling. You can tell he/she had sooo much fun recording this CD because you will have just as much fun listening to it. Find a way to get this CD...you'll be thanking me later. -Tijana



LA DESCENTE DU COUDE  
L'INDECENCE DU COUP  
DARE TO CARE RECORDS

It seems like the influence of post-hardcore acts like At the Drive-In and Swedish revolutionaries Refused has only now tinkled into Montreal. The melodic guitar that builds up into shredding aggression, rackety, busy drums, and driving bass all loan themselves well to this genre. Yet, unlike the aforementioned bands, La Descente lack dynamics musically, instead presenting straightforward, unsurprising tracks. Vocally, we are given what we have come to expect, meaning high-pitched screeches varying from the spoken word to insane punk angst (what I suppose would be deemed screamo) with a social consciousness. However, the only interesting part of these vocals is that they are entirely in French and that the jargon sometimes sounds like a mouthful of mashed potatoes (e.g., "Bam Bam"). -Norberto Gomez, Jr.

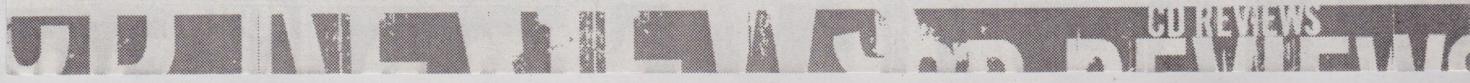


LACRIMAS PROFUNDERE  
AVE END  
NAPALM

Lacrimas Profundere bring their self-professed "rock 'n' sad" music out again on the 11-track AVE END, a melancholic sojourn whose piano-led pain and goth-rock dynamics put the band in prime position along side Lacuna Coil and Paradise Lost as masters of the mopey metal. Heavy and brooding throughout the entire album, a feeling of desperation is especially apparent in the low-register vocals—the factor that ties everything together on this disc. Well-textured yet simplistic, tracks like the driving synth rock of "Amber Girl" and the heavy guitar chasm of "Evade" showcase two major pieces of a crew that succinctly melds aggression and sorrow. [www.napalmrecords.com](http://www.napalmrecords.com) -Mike SOS



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LATTERMAN  
NO MATTER WHERE WE GO...  
DEEP ELM RECORDS

Latterman is from Long Island so it's really no surprise that NO MATTER WHERE WE GO... could be another Taking Back Sunday. The album is well executed, with passionate vocals and drums with conviction. However, their sound is nothing new or innovative. Definitely a good addition to any emo/rock collection, but lacking any pizzazz. -Aimee Curran



LUGOSI  
EDWARD 40 HANDS  
HANGOVER RECORDS

Lugosi's image leaves a lousy first impression. The title of this six-song EP, its amateurish album art (featuring a passed-out person with 40-oz. bottles strapped to his hands), and the names of its songs (specifically "Last Call" and "Born to Booze") are all seemingly conceived with the ingenuity of an alcoholic adolescent. Despite this, EDWARD 40 HANDS is a punk-rock release more melodic, intimate, and honest than one might think. Almost a melancholy confessional, "Born to Booze" is sung with clarity and conviction as The Professor—Lugosi's singer and lyricist—describes overindulgence as a decision with delicate consequences. Though strummed in pop-punk's standard "four-chord" fashion, the restless guitars in songs like "Bottom of the Bay" craft more complicated, less predictable chord patterns that bounce around busily like an eight year-old with ADHD. -Dane!



MACHETE AVENUE  
THE FIRST CUTS  
CONQUER THE WORLD RECORDS

This Canadian duo has the acoustic/indie/folk genre nailed and if that's not enough they've thrown some emo in there as well. Melancholy piano and guitar combined with throaty vocals create a package that is bound to leave the first (or second or third) cut in your heart. Songs of disappointment, hardship, and heartbreak; this could be THE CD to kill yourself to. I'm joking, of course. It doesn't matter whether you are suicidal or not, you will love this CD and everything about it. From the understated CD insert (that surprisingly does not feature the band's member trying to look as hot as possible) to their cover of Cindy Lauper's song "Time after Time". This band is one in a million...maybe even billion. -Tijana



MANIC HISPANIC  
GRUPO SEXO  
BYO RECORDS

Manic Hispanic has a new CD out. I like those vatos, 'cause they tell it like it is, whether they're talking about the chorro (which is funny unless it's happening to YOU), the pinta, lowered rides, or the jura. And they put it all to classic punk rock tunes. This time, los vatos locos put their stamp on songs by Green Day ("Welcome to Paramount"), Fear ("Big Chorizo"), The Weirdos ("Stuck in the Banos"), The Crowd ("Lowered Machine") and more. And The Vibrators' cover, "Lupe, Lupe, Lupe" is the story of my love life – collect calls and promises to do good and never go back to the pinta again. In addition to the lyrics being so funny you'll laugh your cojones off, the band is really tight, with some rocking guitar and great vocals, which isn't a surprise, since these vatos play in big time, famous bands, when they're not doing the Manic Hispanic thing. Check it out, homes! -tekolote



MILES AWAY  
SELF-TITLED  
BRIDGE NINE RECORDS

Do you know what the difference between Miles Away and any other mediocre punk-rock bands is? The members of Miles Away are Australian. That being said, there is no reason to pick up this album, unless you have a strong desire to own everything that comes from the Outback. Clocking it at a blistering 23 minutes, the only positive that comes from the 10 tracks on this CD is that they are short. Run-of-the-mill hardcore is mixed with the occasional metal riff to create an album that sounds like one long, grueling track that would be best used as a torturing device by the military. At least the band's name is fitting, as everyone should stay miles away from this release. -Jeff Slack



MONARCH  
MONARCH  
POP FACTION

Monarch impress with their 10-song debut full-length. They have a definite metal edge and vocals that evoke the spirit of ex-Grade vocalist Kyle Bishop with that alluring gravelly, growled style. Just a few highlights: "Bars & Graveyards" absolutely SLAYS. It's all over the map, commencing with 20 seconds of slow, threatening, sludgy goodness topped off by foreboding growls that seamlessly gain momentum, climaxing at the maniacal one-minute mark when Monarch let loose with ferocious force and full-on speed, only to regress back to that FANTASTIC fleeting sludge passage before ending it with a hardcore feel. Meanwhile, the more bouncy—but still brutal—"Harlot" is also a standout. And words cannot describe "Last Song" (which happens to be third-to-last)...but we shall try. An instrumental, it's slow, sad, depressing, tragically beautiful... Only towards the end is more power introduced, making the final moments both intense AND affecting. -Janelle Jones



MR. PLOW  
MAD PLOW DISEASE  
SELF-RELEASED

MAD PLOW DISEASE is 18 offensive and funny songs from jackass Mr. Plow, who is setting a new standard for low-brow comedy. MAD PLOW DISEASE appeals to the absolute bottom-of-the-barrel personality type. (I have some friends who loved this disc.) Mr. Plow is not trying to produce a great art—he's being funny for his people (the jackasses). Take this disc with a grain of salt, and it is good stuff. Some of the better song titles include "Crackhead Momma", "Officer B.J.", "Bitch Slap Me Face", and "I Wanna Fugly". [beenplowed.com](http://www.beenplowed.com) -H. Barry Zimmerman



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You know one person  
who's been boozed



**NEW ENGLAND ROSES**  
FACE TIME WITH SON  
DOG PONY RECORDS

"Indie" music comes in many flavors. Some is unimpressive pop played by boys with bad haircuts. Some is progressive and pushes our limits as listeners. And some—including New England Roses—is poorly performed and disguised as something else. Written between Le Tigre tours and BARR albums (of which members JD Samson and Brendan Fowler are part, respectively), the songs on FACE TIME WITH SON sound like seconds have been spent on their construction. Some are satisfactory, but barely. A playful-sounding synth underlines the trio's voices in "Candy (Version)", as each repeats an assigned line of lyrics. "Kids in the City" features both female singers, who bark energetically at one another. But most, like "Blood Blood Blood", lull clumsily, out of both tune and sync with the strokes of guitar that stumble behind. Of course, because it's identified as "indie," this inaccessibility and musical immaturity is excusable, even justified...right? -Dane!



**NEW MAXIMUMDONKEY**  
SPIRIT OF THE DONKS  
MAJESTIC RECORDINGS

At first listen, I thought this was nothing more than pop central with no substance, originality, or creativity. However, as every great reviewer does, I listened to the entire album more than once. And yes, it is full on pop/rock, but it's also something else: fucking WELL DONE pop/rock. Wonderful creative moments like the reggae breakdown in "Good Time" are evidence of this. Throughout are other moments of pop perfection, as the use of infectious claps, vocal hooks, fun harmonies, songs of love and shooting the shit (like "Sex Offender") keep the good times rolling. Such crisp and fun delivery blurring the lines of being JUST pop and being something unnameable can only be done by a band close to mastering their craft. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



**NOTHING LESS**  
HERE GOES NOTHING  
ALCATRAX RECORDS

Nothing Less is a cute sounding pop-punk band with some bouncy-poppies tunes. It's light and fluffy and I could definitely see masses of teeny-boppers loving everything on this album—from the first track "You Make Me" with its swung choruses to their final song "North Coast Love Song" about someone's devoted girlfriend. It's really cute. -Audiophile



**POPSTAR ASSASSINS**  
MODERNE  
TRIANGLEBULLETTINES

A mellow compilation of rock ballads, MODERNE is a good album to relax to. I wouldn't recommend this while driving or operator heavy machinery; but if you're in the mood to smoke drugs or have a sexy time, then this could be the album for you. This 11-song record includes very artistic liner notes with the feel of construction paper that will be especially sensational after downing a pocketful of ecstasy. Perhaps MODERNE is only valuable during those strung-out times. Sorry, straight-edge kids, this is not for you. -Luke Skywalker



**RUMBLESEAT**  
IS DEAD  
NO IDEA

"Wow" is the first response on hearing this record by Chris Wppard and Chuck Ragan from Hot Water Music. This album of re-released and rare unreleased songs is simply a delight to listen to. Mixing punk and folk, Rumbleseat utilizes acoustic guitars and the harmonica. A majority of the songs are pleasant to the ears; but when bassist Samantha Jones includes her vocals for duets, you can't help but cringe. Her voice comes off too whiny to be anything near as enjoyable as when Wppard and Ragan sing. I recommend listening to the first five tracks and last six. Avoid the rest. -Luke Skywalker



**SCARS OF TOMORROW**  
THE HORROR OF REALIZATION  
VICTORY

California crushers Scars of Tomorrow have learned a few new tricks since A ROPE TIED TO THE TRIGGER, but thankfully they've retained that ferocious hardcore firepower. Sharing the stage with bands like Norma Jean and Atreyu (whose lead vocalist Alex appears on "The Hidden Grudge") has given THE HORROR OF REALIZATION a leaning towards the melodic end of the metalcore spectrum, while production work courtesy of Matt Bayles undoubtedly shaped songs like "SSNova" to embody the more avant-garde heavy side. Leaving room for ambiance amongst the aggressive assault of tuned-down guitars and unsettling rhythms, Scars of Tomorrow's prevalent new attitude is ambitious and always forceful, even when the 11-track endeavor sounds a bit forced. [www.victoryrecords.com](http://www.victoryrecords.com) -Mike SOS



**SEND MORE PARAMEDICS**  
THE HALLOWED AND THE HEATHEN  
HELLBENT

Prepare for a vicious onslaught of crusty punk metal courtesy of British sickos Send More Paramedics, whose 14-track release channels Slayer, SOD, and Misfits in a way that maintains the band's unique identity while unmercifully beating the hell out of you. Featuring chugging guitars galore, screams in every pitch and range, treacherous bass lines, and top-notch percussion, THE HALLOWED AND THE HEATHEN tackle dark subject matter and bleak imagery with the skill of an All-Pro linebacker, subjecting your ears to some of the best sing-along beatdown tunes heard in a very long time. If you like your music heavy and a little gory with hearty chunks of NYHC, thrash metal, and sludgy punk, this is a must-have album. [www.iatde.com](http://www.iatde.com) -Mike SOS



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**SHORTIE  
WITHOUT A PROMISE**  
EARACHE RECORDS

I saw this album at Hot Topic, on the listening station. Do what you want with that. Well this is a curious collection of pain disguised as pleasure. There is confusion and heartbreak in the lyrics, but Shortie is not whiny about it. Their music reflects the swells in emotion involved in losing someone or never having anyone at all. You must hear the drums on track six, called "The Way Things Are".

the beat rocks. The guitar varies from rocking out heavy and almost overpowering, to gentle accompaniment throughout the album, it is nicely balanced though. There is a DVD along with the CD, it is interesting enough to recommend watching. Some studio tips are revealed, such as how to use dual amps to make guitars more metal. There are also live bootlegs, which can expose how a band really is, for they can not hide behind studio effects. Shortie actually sounds like a riot in an enclosed area, I'd go see them. -Thomas Murray

**SOCRATIC**

**LUNCH FOR THE SKY**  
DRIVE-THRU RECORDS

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a new contender for debut of the year! LUNCH FOR THE SKY is the stunningly first-rate CD by New Jersey's Socratic that is so original and mind-blowing that words cannot explain the joy this record brought me. This is the music Elton John would have made if he was born in the '80s; raised on Ben Folds Five, Queen, and Jimmy Eat World; and smoked an ungodly amount of weed. Call it piano-rock, call it emo, call it pop, call it green eggs and ham—but whatever it is, Socratic is exceptional at it. With 14 beautifully-crafted songs that are impossible to categorize and impossible not to like, this album is for anyone who loves music, whether you think you're punk, emo, indie, or even if you love classic rock. So stop reading my ramblings about this album and find out for yourself why Socratic could very well be the future of music. They're that good. -Jeff Sack



**SONNY VINCENT  
SOUL MATES...**  
CARGO RECORDS

It's odd that Sonny Vincent has dedicated his CD to philosopher Noam Chomsky, especially considering this music's raw power. Vincent channels the vocal spirit of old-timers like Richard Hell, then spits out his thoughts over Social Distortion-influenced grooves (especially on the track "Time Bomb"). Vincent's voice is much smoother than Mike Ness's (but then again, who doesn't have softer vocal cords than that old gravel pit?). On the slightly funky "Concrete Poetic", Vincent is heard doing a swinging David Lee Roth impression. And musically, "Chopping Block" hearkens back to the fast and furious early punk rock of X. Five bonus cuts are also added to this CD's "regular" 12 songs. A particularly strange one is called "Oriental Actors". It features Asian-accented actors speaking atop the sounds of a lot of stuff breaking. Such weirdness aside, however, SOUL MATES... is primarily inspired hard rock. -Dan MacIntosh

**TERROR  
LOWEST OF THE LOW**  
TRUSTKILL

Well, this is where it all began—album-wise, that is—for much-respected L.A.-based hardcore act Terror. And Trustkill has done a primo job with the re-release of 2003's LOWEST OF THE LOW (originally released by Bridge 9), adding three bonus tracks ("Out of My Face" is killer; "Can I Say" is a Dag Nasty cover) and 10 more tracks from a show in Tokyo to the already vicious, straight-up hardcore album. Also of note are the liner notes, which feature some interesting commentary from the band about each of the nine tracks from the original album. So, basically, if you're a hardcore fan and for some reason never obtained LOWEST..., definitely pick up this beefed-up reissue from one of the scene's most vital players. It's inexcusable to make the same mistake twice. -Janelle Jones



**THE BLOODY HOLLIES  
IF FOOTMEN TIRE YOU...  
ALIVE**

The Bloody Hollies have a bloody good rock history pun for a name. Better yet, they create a beautiful noise. IF FOOTMEN TIRE YOU... is packed with urgent, angry, and generally emotional songs. In fact, the song title "We're So Anxious" succinctly sums this band up. Vocalist/guitarist Wesley Doyle leads this restless pack through some moments where they come off like Iggy Pop and other sections where they sound like a sped-up, latter-day version of The Rolling Stones. Doyle's vocals are Jack White (The White Stripes), swanky during "Dirty Water". The group revs up the chugging guitars New York Dolls-style on "Raised by Wolves". It's also easy to warm up to "Right Between the Eyes" simply because its scratchy electric guitar work makes it sound like old The Seeds records. So to The Bloody Hollies we say: let it bleed! -Dan MacIntosh



**THE BOOK OF LISTS  
RED ARROWS**  
GLOBAL SYMPHONIC

The blurry guitars and moody vocals make RED ARROWS a must-have CD. The first minute made me look for their next stop in L.A. Their simple melodies effortlessly flow, standing out from today's mainstream music scene. Listening to this CD is like standing in a huge warehouse listening to everything echo under twinkling Christmas lights and cause ripples in your beverage. -Aimee Curran



**THE DREADFUL YAWNS  
SELF-TITLED**  
BOMP! RECORDS

It's time to slow things down with this disc from The Dreadful Yawns. This is their first full-length album to be released on Bomp! This title ended up hitting me like a fresh breeze with its Southern folk sound and country twang. The lyrics have a bluegrass feel and are simple but stellar throughout. I was impressed with the use of harmonica and steel guitar on tracks like "You Sold the Farm" and "Get Yourself Back Home". This album hints at influences ranging from Bob Dylan to The Grateful Dead but remains unique to The Dreadful Yawns original sound. I'm still taken aback by the fact that SKRATCH is reviewing this. It's fresh, and its different sound is a nice change from the hard punk-rock music I'm used to hearing. -Matt Edmund

# VG CD REVIEWS



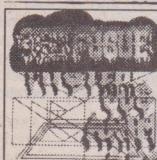
## THE EVIL QUEENS FIRST IT BOILS, THEN IT SPILLS ADDISON RECORDS

Despite my fear that this might be one of those foreign metal bands with a fixation for evil, death and fantasy, I listened to this CD. Boy was I pleasantly surprised, mostly because The Evil Queens are NOTHING like the previously mentioned bands. I mean with a name like The Evil Queens...well, you know. No, they're a band with Red Hot Chili Peppers Funk, Fu Manchu's musical mindset, mixed with classical punk ethics and a metal heads musicianship, and a traditional flat out rock style. And it's all very pleasant, and it's all very first-rate, and this CD is still in my CD player, I can't bring myself to remove it. - Audiophile



## THE FALLOUT PROJECT HOPES & ROPES DARE TO CARE

Quebec hardcore mavens The Fallout Project's six-track offering supplies ample amounts of dissonance for the avant-garde heavy-music follower. Going deep à la Neurosis, this quintet spins intricate webs of spiraling rhythms, sprawling riffs, and angst-ridden vocals that not only hypnotize but seep into your subconscious without warning. Grab the pills and have a ball with this one, kids, as HOPES & ROPES is the perfect soundtrack to bug out to. www.daretocarerecords.com -Mike SOS



## THE FUGUE MYSTERIOUS ANIMALS EP RIYL RECORDS

It's difficult to listen to something with an open mind when the production is so blatantly poor. The good side of that, though, is that instead of hearing how much money the band spent to have their record overproduced, you get to hear what the band really sounds like. Somewhere between the early progressive garage practices of Fugazi and the experimentalism and recklessness of Fear Before the March of Flames, The Fugue offer up a raw-sounding, spazzmatic, intense EP via skittish guitars, wailing vocals, and chaotic noise. Their music incorporates elements of style and sincerity to create an upheaval of emotion, noise, and creativity that any fan of innovative rock can appreciate. -Sarah Conway



## THE HOLLOWPOINTS THE BLACK SPOT DISASTER RECORDS

As its name seems to suggest, THE BLACK SPOT is neither pristine nor polished. Imbedded in each track is the kind of grit and grime that burrows beneath fingernails, that stains undershirts permanently, that impels itself into pores and reappear days later as a blackhead. Belching predictable politics, songs such as "The Black Spot" and "The Sickness" are propelled by a grubby bass guitar and riffs of unrefined, dirty distortion. "The Sky Turned Black" and "Hooks and Sink-Her" (which describes the downward spiral of an "outsourced" employee) are more subtle, specific, successful lyrical assaults. These tracks—still gritty, still gutsy—are better structured. Though The Hollowpoints haven't written an amazing punk-rock record, "Rope's End" is a sign that something significant lies within them: guitars snarl and growl, drums are pummeled, and passionate and pressing coarse cries tell a startling story. -Dane!



## THE PALE PACIFIC URGENCY SIDECHO RECORDS

Simple guitars with quiet melodies; soft, angelic keys; not much in the drum and bass department; and sad, monotonous vocals sum up The Pale Pacific musically...This is just too subdued and boring for its own good. I understand the nice, quiet mood and not much variation in the intensities are all going back to the flavor of Death Cab for Cutie. But, just like DC4C, the lack of surprises leaves an extremely bland product. One listen and you don't find yourself asking for it again. The best moments are when the band does let loose—even if just a few seconds—like the more upbeat track "Identity Theft", which is driven by danceable surf guitar and a pounding drum line, but these moments are much too few to save the album. -Norberto Gomez, Jr.



## THE READYMEN SELF-TITLED JUMP START

Never one to pander to trends, I couldn't care less about what the current rock de rigueur is. I listen to what I like, not what's "cool." Yeah, I still break out the ska sometimes. So what? Whether it be old classic Two Tone in the form of The Specials or The Selector, the soulful goodness of Pietasters, or the ska-punk of Against All Authority, Mustard Plug, and Link 80, it's all good. Anyway, with The Readymen's early discography now available on one disc (the band existed from '92 to '98), we get some very cool ska-punk in the vein of Op Ivy, Assorted Jellybeans, and Link 80—definitely mostly consisting of edgy, super-fast blasts. And the band really shine on the more hardcore fare (like the GREAT "No Trust"); and when they get down on the ambitious, reggaefied four-minute opus "Waste Away" (which appropriately closes out the disc). -Janelle Jones



## THE REAL MCKENZIES 10,000 SHOTS FAT WRECK CHORDS

The whiskey-swilling, bong-toking Scots/Canadians bust out another set of bagpipe driven punk rock tunes, and not a moment too soon. Because there's no one else that sounds like these lads. 10,000 SHOTS is the band's third full-length release, and it's first on the Fat Wreck label. It matches the high spirits of its first release, LOCH'D AND LOADED, which was missing on COT AND ABOOT, its second album. This time around, the majority of the songs are covers of traditional songs, which the lads speed up considerably. Yes, even "Comin' Thro' the Rye" will make you want to slam a shot, not to mention your neighbor in the pit. The original tunes are energetic and feature tongue in cheek lyrics, as in "I Hate My Band" and "Best Day Until Tomorrow", the latter of which advocates keeping a positive outlook when facing a firing squad. You'll also appreciate the fine musicianship here, especially the rock-influenced guitar work. Buy it or stuff it under your kilt and abscond with it, because you HAVE to get this disc! -tekolote

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Kristy Sato

THE RIBEYE BROTHERS  
BAD BALLADS AND CAUTIONARY TALES  
TIMES BEACH RECORDS

The second full-length release from this swamprock garage band is a throwback to some of the best bands of the '60s (like The Seeds or The Zombies). Singer Tim Cronin and drummer Jon Kleiman (both ex-members of Monster Magnet) have hit upon a sound that echoes early The Doors, complete with vocals that sound eerily like a countrified Jim Morrison and keyboards that sound like Ray Manzarek. Nobody told The Ribeye Brothers they couldn't be the greatest band ever. This album definitely kicks some swampy ass. -Dug

THE SASS  
BLEACH BLONDE



THE SASS  
BLEACH BLONDE  
RIGHT EYE RECORDS

This is the perfect album for the man in his late 20s who wishes that Third Eye Blind would regroup with a new, crappier singer, write songs devoid of hooks and melody, and add a keyboardist to fill out the awful sound. If this person does exist, then he should be the only one with any reason to pick up the debut from Columbus, OH's The SASS. The 12 songs on this album all have their own sound. Too bad they all sound like someone else. The majority sound like Brand New if they released B-sides of the songs that they wrote when they were shit-drunk. Lead singer James Witt has a voice completely lacking emotion and a tolerable key—which makes you wonder why he is even in the band, since he doesn't write the songs (guitarist Nicholas Manos is to blame for this). If you still feel compelled to pick up BLEACH BLONDE after reading this, then obviously you have a real need to punish yourself and everyone in listening range. -Jeff Slack



TRACK THE CURSE  
THE NEW LAND  
SPINS GOOD

Track the Curse is an outfit that sounds like two completely different bands on THE NEW LAND. One side uses an unfittingly gruff vocal sounding more like a growling Florida death-metal act, while the other opts for a more West Coast punk-rock vocal vibe, as the band trudges through a bastardized concoction of splattercore, black metal, and three-chord punk stumps. On this 11-track offering, this quartet aim for the lowest common denominator of rock, keeping it at gut level throughout tracks like "Serpentine City" and "Reaching for the Lost". If Cannibal Corpse hooked up with Hot Water Music, this would be the result. www.spinsgoodrecords.com -Mike SOS



UNSANE  
BLOOD RUN  
RELAPSE RECORDS

Oddly, the songs run in between tracks. Song one actually runs fifteen seconds before changing to track two, but it is still the same song. The same first song actually runs all the way to track nine. All the songs do this, various increments of time change tracks while keeping the same song. Too bad the music isn't as creative as the track distribution. It sounds like Ministry, but only the slower crappy stuff. The stuff that sounds like a record not moving fast enough as the distraction in an awkward situation. If you told me that the second song was the exact same thing as the first, I'd believe you. I thought it was funny that track nineteen was the start of the third song, appropriately called "Killing Time". It was a bit more lively and compelling than the rest, but still didn't really interest me. There is too much of an old school metal sound here, without the dirty unwashed grit to back it up. -Thomas Murray



VARIOUS ARTISTS  
CAKE BOY SOUNDTRACK  
KUNG FU RECORDS

For a low-budget film written by and starring The Vandals' guitarist Warren Fitzgerald, directed by bassist Joe Escalante, and featuring No Use for a Name as the main act throughout the film, it certainly leaves a lot to be desired entertainment-wise. The film was shot on nights and weekends without a crew, and it's obvious when trying to follow the story that it was pieced together over the course of two years. The soundtrack features several bands, including Piebald, Yellowcard, and (of course) The Vandals, leaving the soundtrack quite a bit more desirable than the film itself. The only complaint I have is that the first five songs are all No Use songs, which leaves the whole feeling of a "compilation" right out the window. But it could be worse. -Sarah Conway



VARIOUS ARTISTS  
ESTRUS KAMIKAZE ASS CHOMP 'N' STOMP CD SAMPLER  
VOL. 4  
ESTRUS RECORDS

As a rule, I hate comp discs—mainly because so many of them have some good stuff surrounded by crap. But Estrus Records has put together a comp disc worthy of your money and your time which will give your remote control some time off. There is not one rotten apple in this barrel. And a lot of these bands deserve your complete attention. Some of the standout bands on this rock-solid comp include The Diplomats of Solid Sound, The DT's, Fatal Flying Gullotines, and The Fall-Outs. Based on the rocking cool sounds found here, Estrus Records should be investigated and taken advantage of. www.estrus.com -H. Barry Zimmerman



VARIOUS ARTISTS  
KICKED OUTTA PURGATORY  
HAIRBALL 8 RECORDS

This massive, 29-band psychobilly compilation is the perfect soundtrack for someone who celebrates Halloween all year long. With cuts from well-known bands such as Nekromantix, Horropops, and Hayride to Hell—along with tons of lesser-known bands—this is a great introduction to gravity-defying pompadours, fast cars, and loose women covered with tattoos. While the album focuses on songs about blood, death, and rotting corpses, it's pretty hard to separate these tunes from their '50s roots and good ol' rockabilly stylings. The majority of the bands are trios with a small drum kit, a stand-up bass, and a hollow-body guitar, thus obtaining a similar sound. Creativity and innovation doesn't really kick in until the second half of this disc with creepy stylings from Deadbolt, Scary B.O.O.M., and Coffin Creeps. -Dug

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Frontside Indy **Trick**

McDevitt Skatepark, Boise, ID **Location**

Prestige Skateboard & est. yesterday **Sponsors**

Loren Williams **Photographer**

[loren@idasl.org](mailto:loren@idasl.org) **Contact Info**

**Kelley Williams**



## Kelley Williams

**Trick** Crooked Grind

**Location** McCall, ID

**Sponsors** Prestige Skateboards & es.t yesterday

**Photographer** Loren Williams

**Contact Info** [loren@idast.org](mailto:loren@idast.org)



Set-up for a 50-50 grind **Trick**

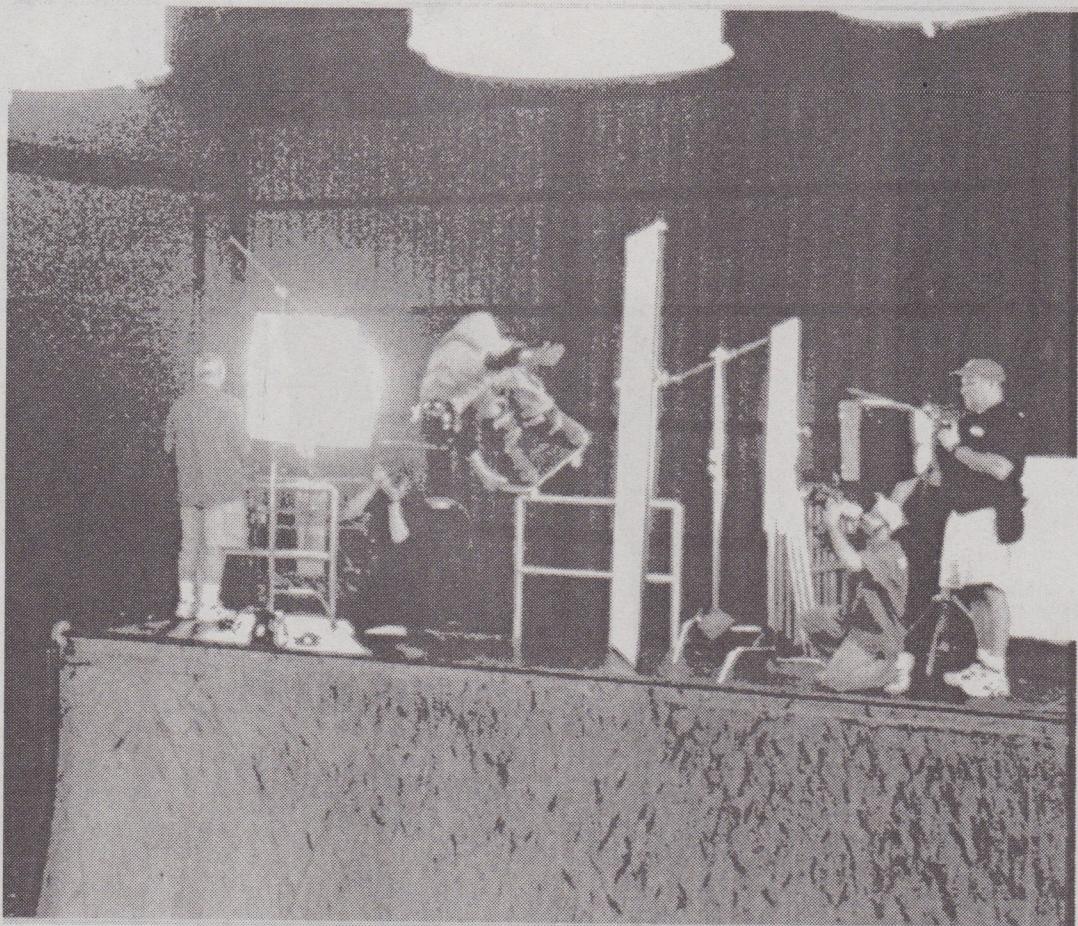
McDevitt Skatepark, Boise, ID **Location**

Prestige Skateboard & est. yesterday **Sponsors**

Loren Williams **Photographer**

[loren@idas.org](mailto:loren@idas.org) **Contact Info**

**Kelley Williams**



## Tony Hawk

Nose Bone **Trick**  
Monica Airport **Location**  
ise, Fury, Adio **Sponsors**  
Vodegel **Photographer**  
2@aol.com **Contact Info**



## Kelley Williams

**Trick** Ollie off a ledge

**Location** Buhl Skatepark, Buhl, ID

**Sponsors** Prestige Skateboards & est yesterday

**Photographer** Loren Williams

**Contact Info** [loren@idasl.org](mailto:loren@idasl.org)



## Eddie G Money

**Trick** Switch Frontside 50-50

**Location** La Habra, CA

**Sponsors** Relaxed Skate

**Photographer** Cameron Vodegel

**Contact Info** [judiment12@aol.com](mailto:judiment12@aol.com)



## Tom Penny

360 Varial Heelflip **Trick**

Active Demo, Orange County, CA **Location**

Flip, ES **Sponsors**

Cameron Vodegel **Photographer**

rudiment12@aol.com **Contact Info**



## Carlos DeAndre

**Trick** Frontside Ollie

**Location** Active Demo, Orange County, CA

**Sponsors** World, Etnies

**Photographer** Cameron Vodegel

**Contact Info** [rudiment12@aol.com](mailto:rudiment12@aol.com)

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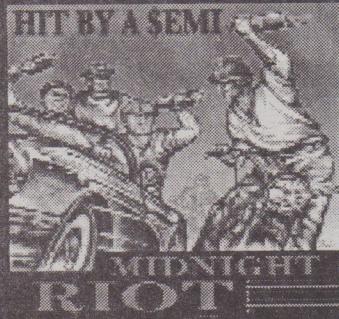
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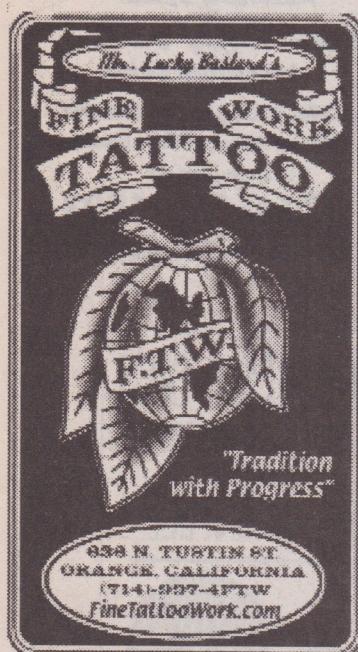


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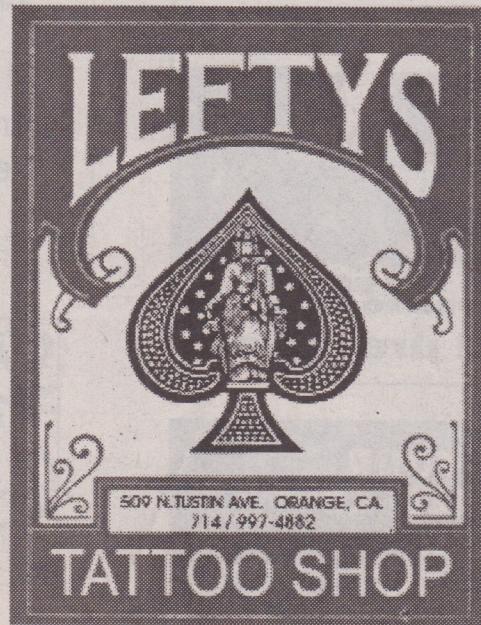


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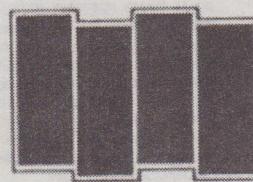
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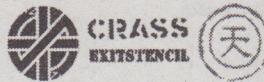
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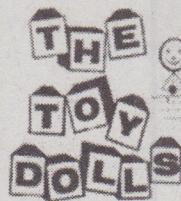
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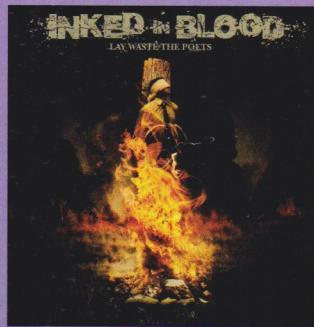
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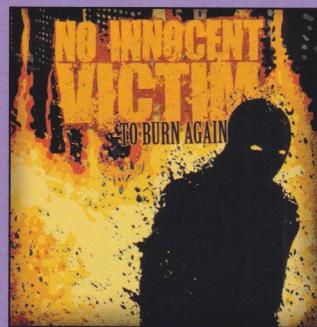
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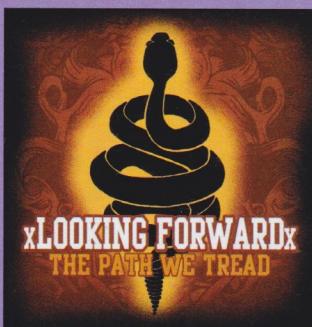
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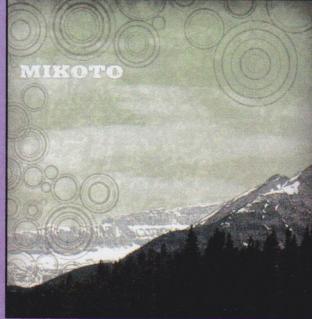
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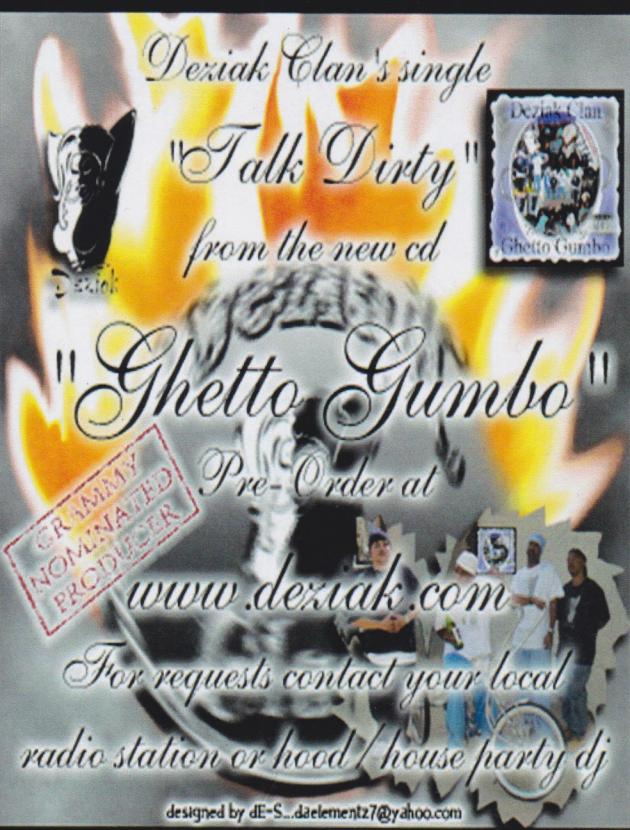


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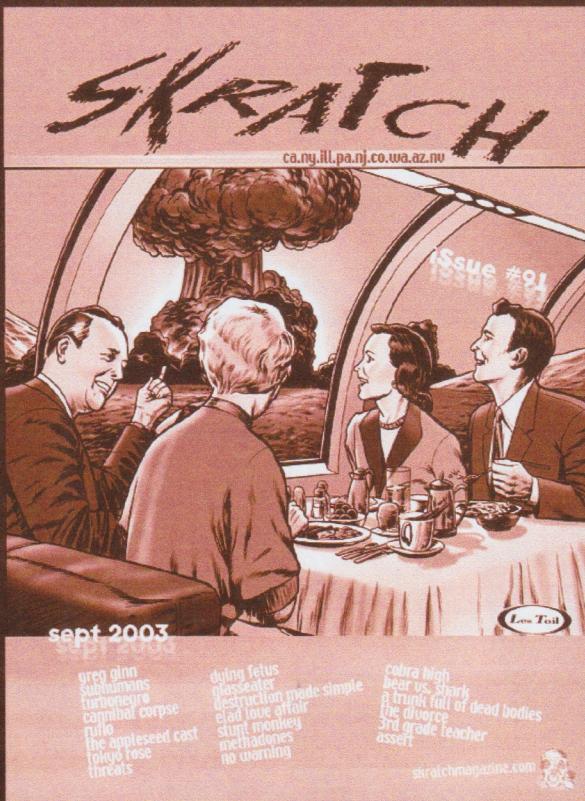
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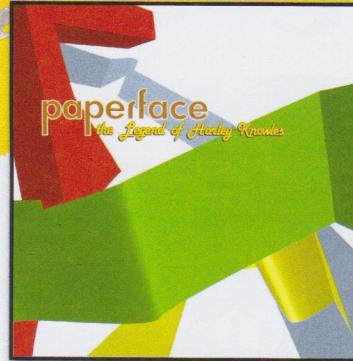
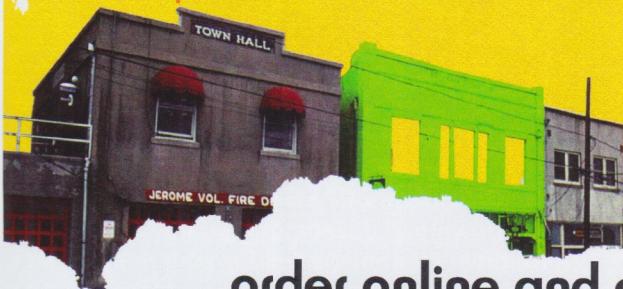
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